













CAMPAIGNING IN THESSALY.

[F. M. M. M.]

ELLIS

ELIA

# THE BATTLEFIELDS OF THESSALY.

WITH PERSONAL EXPERIENCES IN  
TURKEY AND GREECE.

BY

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WITH PORTRAITS AND MAPS.

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STAMFORD STREET AND CHANCING CROSS.

TO.

THE OTTOMAN ARMY,

THAT GALLANT, HIGHLY DISCIPLINED, PATIENT,

AND INDOMITABLE SOLDIERY,

WHOSE COURAGE AND FORTITUDE HAVE

SO OFTEN SAVED THEIR COUNTRY

FROM THE ASSAULTS OF

ITS ENEMIES,

I DEDICATE THIS WORK.



by all his staff, as well as by many Ottoman officers of humbler station. The uniform courtesy and hospitality of the Turks of all ranks make it a pleasure to visit the Ottoman Army.

Of the Greeks, of course, we saw less, but our involuntary visit to their warships was most interesting. It enabled us to make the acquaintance of some agreeable Greek officers, to see the glories of Athens, and to hear the views of the King of Greece. Our treatment by the Greeks gave no cause of complaint.

In one respect our experience was probably unique. During a condition of actual warfare, and within a period of three days, we were given audiences by both the Sovereigns of the two combatants—the Sultan and the King of Greece. We also met and conversed with the Prime Ministers and leading statesmen of the two countries.

All that we saw and heard during our brief but eventful experiences in Thessaly, at Athens and Constantinople, confirmed me in the conviction, that the traditional policy of England towards the Ottoman Empire is the right and the necessary policy. The substitution of a policy of hostility for one of friendship towards

## PREFACE.

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THIS book is intended mainly as a narrative of my own and my son's personal experiences during the campaign in Thessaly, and our subsequent visit to Athens and Constantinople.

In Thessaly we saw the Turkish soldiers fight in several battles, and were with the army constantly, both on the march and in camp. We learned from thorough experience to appreciate not only the courage and tenacity, but also the admirable discipline, good conduct, and kindly nature of the Ottoman troops.

We traversed Thessaly from the Melouna Pass to Valestinos, and admired the majestic mass of Olympus with its snow-clad heights, the beauties of the Peneius, the exquisite scenery of Tempe, the luxuriant cornfields of the rich plains, and the graceful background of mountains that everywhere relieves the Thessalian landscape.

We were received with great consideration and kindness by the Mushir Edhem Pasha and

the chief independent Mussulman Power of the world has brought nothing but mischief to British interests, as well as to the peoples whose cause has been espoused by England. This has been the unfortunate result both in Europe and Asia, and, above all, in India.

A policy of friendship towards the Ottoman Empire is absolutely necessary for this country. It was the policy of Lord Beaconsfield; it is based on the eternal necessities of strategy, race, and politics; and, if the gravest disasters are to be averted, it will have to be resumed.

I have to express my obligation to Lieutenant Crookshank, of the Engineers, who helped me in the preparation of the plans; to Mr. Clive Bigham's excellent work, "With the Turkish Army in Thessaly;" and also to the correspondents of the *Standard*, *Daily News*, and Reuter's Agency, whose letters I have been allowed to use.

The bulk of this work was written two months ago, but its issue has been delayed by various causes, which I regret.

E. A. B.

*August, 1891.*





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# THE BATTLEFIELDS OF THESSALY.

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## CHAPTER I.

THE war between Turkey and Greece has not been on a large scale. The contest has been one-sided and by no means severe. The numbers of men engaged have been moderate, and the losses have not been heavy. The fighting was limited to a period of one month. It has resulted in the Greeks being driven out of Thessaly, and the whole of that rich province falling into Turkish occupation. The fighting in Epirus was of little consequence. Both sides occupied at the close much the same positions as at the beginning. So far then the Turco-Greek War of 1897 has seemed to be of small importance, both as regards its character and its immediate results. Yet the real significance of the recent struggle in Thessaly and its political consequences are infinitely more important and

more far-reaching than the actual fighting would import.

It is part of a great development of that eternal Eastern Question which has such profound interest and gravity for England. It marks a striking, possibly a decisive stage in the history of the Ottoman Empire, and in the grouping of the Great Powers. It has exercised a most remarkable influence upon the feeling and conduct of the millions of the world's population who profess the Mussulman faith, and in whom recent events in Turkey have aroused a feeling of union and cohesion long unknown to Islam. The sentiment of growing solidarity among Mahometans has received inspiration and vigour from the triumphs of the Turkish arms in Thessaly. How important and how serious for England and for the Empire of England the future course of this Islamic revival may be, the most superficial consideration of our position in India will show. In that wonderful fabric of wise and beneficent dominion over many alien races and creeds, more than 60,060,000 of the most sterling and most warlike of the Queen's subjects are devoted to the Mussalman faith. The remarkable sovereign who holds the north-western gates of India—

the avenues by which all the great conquerors of India have approached its fertile plains—the Amir Abdurrahman, is also a devoted Moslem.

Another important result of the war in Thessaly and its accompanying events has been the prominence which the war has given to the keen rivalry between Russia and Germany for the military alliance of Turkey. This war also marks the serious decline—it might almost be said the total loss—of British influence at Constantinople. Germany has had the good sense to secure the friendship of Turkey by protecting the Turkish power, while we have been recklessly reviling everything Turkish. Russia is jealous of German predominance at Constantinople, which Russian statesmen had come to regard as their own special preserve. Germany has secured the support, in case of European war, of the splendid Ottoman army; and that alliance means that the German monarchies have got, the balance of military force on their side as against their great rivals, the Franco-Russian league.

The value of the Turkish fighting power, and the importance of Mussulman good-will to us are undeniable. It is for these reasons, and,

in addition, because of the immense value to this country of the Ottoman Empire as the guardian of Constantinople and the Straits, that the writer of this book has persistently maintained the necessity of careful accuracy and moderation in criticising the conduct of the Sovereign and Government of Turkey. The Sultan is not only the master of many valiant legions, he is also the Caliph of Islam. Justice towards the Turkish people and towards the Mussulman religion is not merely right morally, it is absolutely expedient and necessary for the British people, who rule so vast a Mussulman dominion.

Unhappily a large section of the politicians and of the Press of this country, not limited to the Radical party, have thrown considerations of prudence, not less than of accuracy, to the winds, and have indulged in a violence of language and a recklessness of abuse towards the Sultan and his ministers and officers which are without precedent. When I condemn "sham sentiment and atrocity-mongering," I do not refer to suitable and well-considered reprobation of the evil deeds that were done in Armenia during the last three months of 1895. The most violent denunciations and the most

vituperative epithets were indulged in during the ten months after December, 1894, and were based upon journalistic fictions regarding the Sassun revolt and its repression. These stories either had no existence whatever in reality, or rested on the most slender basis of fact.

By atrocity-mongering and sham sentiment, I mean two things: first, the charge against a nation or power of atrocities which do not exist; and secondly, the use of the atrocity cry for party purposes in this country. For nine months the Sultan, the Turkish Government, the Turkish army, and the Turkish people were vilified and attacked in England for alleged atrocities in the suppression of the Sassun revolt, which never had any existence at all. There was a revolt in Armenia, and it was suppressed at the cost of 262 lives, or, as the most exaggerated stories put it, at the cost of five or six hundred lives. This was exaggerated into atrocities of the worst kind, by which were said to have been sacrificed some 30,000 Armenian lives. These horrible atrocities never existed; the stories were absolute fiction, and they were paid for by that Great Power whose object is to destroy the Ottoman Empire,



and by destroying that empire to deal a deadly blow at the dominion of England. Terrible deeds were done in Asia Minor, but they were done at a later period, and they were largely caused by the agitation got up in England. This sham sentiment caused injury to Turkey, great injury to the Armenians, and much injury to England herself and to British interests. It is this false and injurious atrocity-mongering that should be condemned. I deeply deplore the terrible events which took place in Asia Minor at the end of 1895. When I had the opportunity of speaking to the Sultan in January last, I ventured to impress upon His Majesty the disastrous effect that these evil deeds had upon this country, and urged him to use the severest means to prevent their recurrence. The Sultan then detailed to me the careful measures he had already taken with this object, which measures, he felt assured, would bring about the desired result of peace and security.

This intemperate abuse of the Sultan and his representatives, long before there was any practical ground for such charges, created a very bitter feeling of indignation not only in official circles in the Ottoman Empire, but also throughout the mass of the Mussulman population. It

strengthened the conviction, which had been spreading among the Turkish people, that there was a wide-spread conspiracy among the Christian Powers, which England then appeared to lead, for the overthrow of Turkish rule and for the destruction of the Mussulman faith. This sentiment was inflamed by the deliberate provocations of the Armenian "revolutionary" conspirators, who sought to attain their political independence by provoking bloody reprisals. The unfortunate blunders of our Ambassador at Constantinople, his marked subservience to Russia and to France, and his very impracticable and, as regards the dominant Mussulman element, his exasperating scheme of reforms, promulgated in August, 1895, added fuel to the flames, always so ready to burst forth. Whatever may be thought of the Turkish character or of the Mussulman religion, it is contrary to human nature to expect a proud and dominant race and creed to give up the ascendancy of centuries without a struggle. The spark was applied by the rash and injurious Armenian *émeute* in Constantinople on September 30, 1895. Then 2000 armed Armenians tried to force their way to the Porte. They murdered the police officer who sought by peaceful remonstrance to

stop them, and also shot over a score of his men. This outrage in the capital of the Empire, directed, as it was believed, against their Sovereign, the Caliph of their faith, had an electric effect upon the whole Mahometan inhabitants of Asia Minor. It started those terrible reprisals which during the next three months of 1895 caused so much slaughter and misery to the Armenian population.

The Eastern Question, so far as England is concerned, consists of two main factors: First, there is the humanitarian factor. This factor is due to the tremendous danger of arousing, or letting loose, the religious and race antagonisms that underlie the sentiment of the heterogeneous populations of the Ottoman Empire. This peril has always been present to the mind of English statesmen in the past, and has not, until lately, been overlooked even by the mass of politicians. The second factor is the supreme importance of Constantinople and the Straits to the European balance of power, and especially to the Eastern power and naval supremacy of England. Russia in control of Constantinople and the Dardanelles would mean the speedy loss to England of her naval supremacy in the Mediterranean. With the loss of naval supremacy

would go, of course, Egypt, the Suez Canal, and probably Malta as well. The possession of Constantinople by Russia would mean the control by Russia of the matchless fighting material of the Turkish army, a force against which, if directed by European officers, we could not for long hope to defend India.

Both these all-important factors have been for the past three years absolutely ignored by the Radical party in this country, and what is more serious, by a considerable portion of the Unionist party as well.

When the opportunity offered during the Easter recess of visiting the scene of the war that was imminent between Turkey and Greece, I seized it with eagerness. My reasons were four-fold. I wished to see the real condition of the Ottoman army, its fighting power and organisation, and the generalship of its officers. I was anxious to see how the Turkish soldiers conducted themselves in an enemy's country, and towards a beaten foe. I had also a strong desire to do anything in my power to shorten the struggle and to make peace between two countries and two races, which in my opinion were bound by every consideration of self-interest to be friends and not enemies. The fourth reason—and one which

weighed even more with me than the others—was the supreme wish to be able the better, from the knowledge and experience gained during the campaign, to promote at home the old and necessary policy of friendship towards the Ottoman Empire.

The policy of friendly pressure towards Turkey, instead of hostile coercion, has always been advocated by me. This has been the traditional policy of English statesmen. The hostile coercion, which has been so much in vogue during the past three years, has done no good to any race or interest in Turkey. Rather has it caused infinite mischief—much disaster and suffering in Turkey, much alienation between England and Turkey, and much loss of prestige and influence to this country.

## CHAPTER II.

## CAUSES OF THE WAR.

THE real cause of the war between Greece and Turkey is not easy to find. It cannot be assigned, as most Turkish difficulties are assigned by our Turcophobes, to misgovernment, or to some form of malignity at Constantinople. It may be attributed with much show of reason to the ambition and vanity of the Greek race, and especially of the political leaders at Athens. Probably no country has a vainer or more reckless body of politicians at its head than the modern Hellenic kingdom. To their character a writer disposed to be very Phil-Hellenic has recently borne remarkable witness.

The estimate in which Mr. Bennet Burleigh, the famous war correspondent, holds the Greeks is quoted below. Mr. Burleigh was with the Greeks throughout the campaign and he began his experiences with a considerable prejudice, in favour of the Hellenic cause. His disillusionment seems to have been complete. The follow-

ing extract is taken from his article in the *Fortnightly Review* of July this year :—

In a wide and varied experience I have never known a people whose public affairs and business intercourse were so flagrantly conducted upon a basis of systematised delusion. The races that to-day inhabit Hellas, speaking generally, have all the faults and few of the good qualities of the old Greek. Their chicanery, as much as their inveterate indolence, have cramped the commerce and retarded the progress of the country. English merchants and traders declare that it is almost impossible to do business with the Greeks, so corrupt is the administration of the customs, and so frail is the commercial morality of the people. With few, if any, exceptions, the foreign journalists who recently proceeded to Greece were at the outset favourably disposed to the Greek cause. The plausible Greek, however, got found out, and those who wished to bless, found that truth required they should ban. It was not only that they detested the utter incompetence, vapouring, and cowardice of the great majority of the Greek officers, or that they saw the army was without organisation, and the whole official class astoundingly unscrupulous; but that the ordinary native, even with the land in the direst stress of war, neglected no opportunity to trick and cheat. Preferably, strangers were his prey—that many of them were volunteers come to give of their means and to fight for Greece, made no difference. The indictment is black, but nevertheless, if needs be, capable of proof. Nor is half told of the causes which provoked the disgust of foreigners. The small mean-nesses of a people may be overlooked, but the callous treatment of volunteers, the cowardly abandonment of women and children and wounded on repeated occasions to the enemy, deserved to be recalled against the Greeks, and particularly

their military chiefs. To maltreat prisoners, leading them haltered and bound with ropes through the streets, to alter and destroy letters and telegrams, so that only garbled and false information should get abroad, are practices not commonly employed by the officials of civilised governments. Yet these things were frequently done before and during the war.

Another interesting and, in its way, remarkable verdict upon the condition of modern Greece and the character of the Greek people will be found in Appendix I. at the end of this volume.\*

The Greeks are intensely jealous as well as vain, and any increase of Slav power in the Balkan Peninsula at once arouses keen resentment. The Greeks have never forgotten that theirs was the Empire of the East for eleven centuries. To the glories of Byzantium and Constantinople the modern Greeks always recur. The creation of a great and independent Bulgaria in 1878, the union of Eastern Roumelia with Bulgaria in 1885, and the enlargement of Servia and Montenegro, each and all aroused Greek jealousy and ambition. Nor is this unnatural, for the Greeks are the only non-Slav race in

\* Appendix I. Extracts from Mr. E. J. Dillon's article in the *Contemporary Review* for July, 1897.



South-Eastern Europe, except the Turks, and the Slav torrent is as great a peril to the Hellenes as it is to the Ottomans.

It is a curious illustration of the irony of fate that the most prominent champion of modern Greece in this country should have borne the principal part in dashing for ever the hopes of an Hellenic restoration in South-Eastern Europe. The creation of the vigorous and practical, though brutal, Bulgarians into a great independent State, stretching right across the Balkan Peninsula, has effectually shut out Hellenic power from those countries. Pan-Bulgaria is an effective and deadly barrier to a restoration of the Byzantine Empire. Mr. Gladstone's agitation and influence led to the creation of Pan-Bulgaria. So inimical are Bulgarians to the Hellenic race that it is far more probable that Macedonia will become Bulgarian than Greek, if it ever ceases to be Turk.

Greece was, therefore, early in the field. A training camp for 12,000 men was established at Thebes by the Greek Government in July, 1896; every effort was made from Athens, unofficially and officially, to stir up troubles in Crete, and the Ethnike Hetairia was allowed and encouraged to pour rifles and agitators into the island.

When it became clear that the whole of the Great Powers formally, and the majority of them genuinely, desired peace and wished to avert a Cretan crisis, the Greeks only became more urgent and active in their revolutionary propaganda. The Cretan Christians were excited in every possible way to attack, outrage, and drive into exile their Mussulman neighbours. Europe was openly defied. A regular policy of chantage was adopted by Greece towards the European Powers. Greece evidently hoped to drive the Great Powers, by playing on their unconcealed dread of a general war, into conceding her unreasonable demands. The declaration by the Powers of autonomy for Crete, and its acceptance by the Sultan, brought matters to a climax. The last thing that the Greeks desire for Crete is autonomy. They wish Crete to become Greek, not autonomous. They fear that if the Cretans once taste the delights of self-government, their Pan-Hellenic tendencies will vanish.

Greece invaded Crete, believing that the Great Powers would let her annex the island rather than risk a European war. Foiled in this piratical attempt by the union and firmness of the Great Powers, and by the extreme

moderation of Turkey, Greece decided to precipitate a collision on the Thessalian border.

Greece had been for some time in a very bad way. The country is for the most part poor and badly governed. The Greeks have never been an imperial race. They have never possessed the genius or arts of sound administration. Brilliant in poetry, in eloquence, in the fine arts, in every kind of intellectual subtlety, they have always been lacking in the real governing power. Athens at its most splendid epoch was a country of 30,000 free-men, who lived by the forced industry of 100,000 slaves. And Athens was but one of a dozen small Grecian states, always living in bitter hostility to each other. The Greek of to-day resembles in his bad qualities the Greek of the Periclean era, without the intellectual and artistic brilliance which almost redeemed the vices of that golden age.

Greece has been bankrupt for some years. Her creditors have been docked of three-fourths of their due. The foreign loans have been spent in arming Greece, and in corruption among the needy journalists and lawyers who fill her legislature. This latter class abounds in Greece, where men much prefer to live on agitation,

rather than on honest work. Crete is a rich island which has been very lightly taxed under the much abused Turk. The Greeks desired to annex Crete, which they regard as a milch cow, to be milked and bled for the benefit of Greece. The Cretans could hardly be expected to realise the real motive of their so-called friends in the midst of insurrection and rapine, when passions are heated and bloodshed prevails. There is little doubt, however, they will thoroughly understand if Crete gets autonomy and things settle down into peace and order. Hence the intense desire of the Greeks to get hold of Crete at once, while the rancour between Christian and Mussulman was keen, and while the war fever was raging.

The moment Greece heard in August, 1896, that the Sultan had conceded autonomy to Crete on the guarantee of the Great Powers, that moment agitators and rifles were poured from Greece into Crete in order to stir up strife. The Cretans were at first highly pleased and satisfied with the concessions of the Turkish Government. Then came the needy lawyers and journalists and professional bandits from Greece, who promised the Cretan Christians the lands and houses of their Mussulman neighbours.

and commenced a campaign of outrage and murder against the Mussulmans, in order to provoke retaliation and excite civil war. In vain had the Austrian Government, which foresaw what was coming, proposed to the other Powers the establishment of a naval cordon round Crete in order to keep out the arms and the agitators. Great Britain very inadvisedly declined to join in this most wise proposal of prevention.

The persistence of the Great Powers and the moderation of Turkey would probably, in the long run, have overcome the mischievous efforts of the agitators, but as a last throw of the revolutionary dice, the Greek Government sent over Colonel Vassos and his four thousand men, who acted as firebrands throughout the island. Colonel Vassos landed on February 15th, 1897. A perfect deluge of blood and fire was at once inaugurated. Everywhere the Christian insurgents rose and fell upon their defenceless Mussulman neighbours, plundering, outraging, and in many cases massacring them. The barbarous and bloody work in Sitia, where over a thousand Mussulmans were murdered, is but a specimen of what came from the invasion of these Greek fli-

busters. Hundreds of wretched Mussulmans were butchered in the villages. Many were burned alive in their mosques. Women and children were outraged and mutilated. In fact, the worst of the Armenian horrors were paralleled by these Christian warriors. The whole Mussulman population of Crete is now crowded together in a few coast towns, where they have suffered and still suffer extreme misery and starvation. Upon the effect of Colonel Vassos' invasion, and upon the sufferings of the Mussulman inhabitants, Mr. George Curzon said in the House of Commons on May 7th, 1897 :

The interior of the island of Crete at the present moment is in the occupation of a large number of Cretans, who are in the occupation of the villages and the enjoyment of the possessions and crops of the unhappy Mussulmans who have been turned out. They are leading a life of armed idleness, wandering up and down the mountains, exchanging shots with everybody whom they meet, and, I am sorry to say, killing every Mohammedan of either sex who falls within their range. Near the towns these Christian Insurgents are engaged, in spite of reiterated warnings, in attacks upon the blockhouses and the outposts of the positions, and in cutting off the water supply, and otherwise endeavouring to starve the people within the walls. These Insurgents are, to a large extent, led by Greek officers, the ranks are filled with Greek Volunteers, the only Artillery they appear to possess are Greek cannon. In the recent interview, which the Admirals

had with the eight Insurgent Chiefs, five of them were found to be Greek lawyers, and a sixth was a Greek doctor. The Leader of the Opposition, in the last debate in this House on Cretan affairs, told us we were trying to starve and bombard the Cretan people into the acceptance of autonomy. The phrase was one which fell very glibly from the lips of the right hon. gentleman, but it is absolutely destitute of any foundation in fact. What are the facts as to the alleged starvation caused by the blockade, of which the right hon. gentleman is so much in dread? The reports we have received from persons who have been moving freely about among the Insurgents in the interior assure us that the canteens and eating houses are doing a roaring trade; that food is everywhere abundant; that now the crops are about to be gathered there will be no lack of provisions; and that in the interior the Christians will not only have their own crops, but those of the evicted Mussulmans as well. These facts which I have narrated to the House represent a faithful picture of society as it at present exists in that Island. Now I turn to what is passing in the towns, and here I will deal with the topic raised by two or three preceding speakers of the continuance of the Turkish troops in the Island. . . . May I put before the House what the facts are with regard to the coast towns and the Turkish troops in them? In these seaports there are next to no Christians. Either they have fled into the interior or have been deported by British and foreign ships to other shores. But these towns are packed with dense populations of Mohammedan refugees, defenceless, and with no means whatever of subsistence. Let me take a concrete case to make my argument clear. Take the case of Candia. It is a town in which we are principally interested owing to the fact that the occupying force is in the main supplied by Her Majesty's troops. In the

town of Candia there are at the present moment no fewer than 50,000 Mohammedan refugees, of whom 32,000 have no connection whatever with the neighbourhood, but come from different parts of the Island, and, as compared with this enormous aggregate, there are only 500 Christians. These 50,000 Mohammedans are peasants, with no handicraft of their own, no means of making money, and who are only kept alive from day to day by doles of flour sent by the Sultan, who are decimated by small-pox, and afflicted by a perpetual cutting off of their water supply. Outside the military cordon drawn round Candia containing this defenceless population, there are 60,000 armed Cretan Insurgents ready at any moment, if the protection we afford them be withdrawn, to pounce upon these people and to inflict upon them the utmost cruelty. How are these Mohammedans protected? There are in the town of Candia something under 1500 European troops, and there are some 3500 Turkish troops. The Europeans occupy the town, and the Turkish troops occupy and defend the military cordon drawn outside. Our authorities report to us that the European troops are powerless to protect both the town and cordon. How can we under these circumstances *withdraw the Turkish garrison*? If we did so, I can only say *it would be a prelude to massacre compared with which those of Armenia would sink into insignificance*, and it would be massacre enacted under the eyes of the Powers and with our direct responsibility . . . What I have said of Candia is true also of Retimo. At Retimo the population, which before was 10,000, has been swollen by the immigration of refugees to 30,000. A census taken by the Relief Committee of Mohammedans shows at this moment, after all that has passed, that there are in the Island as many as 107,000 Mohammedans, or one-third of the total population of Crete. Out of these



107,000 Mohammedans in the Island no fewer than 67,000 are at the present moment in receipt of relief. We are told that the Island of Crete is clamouring for annexation to Greece. This minority—this one-third of the population amounting to as large a proportion as in the case of Ireland refused the offer of Home Rule—a minority to whose views great respect was attached, at any rate by this side of the House—this minority says that under no circumstances will they accept annexation to Greece, but will rather fight to the death or emigrate. We do not want to depopulate the Island of Crete either by massacre or emigration. The Cretan Mohammedans are about the most stable element in the population in that country. . . . An hon. member who preceded me put forward certain cases of misbehaviour on the part of the Turkish troops last year. I think it only fair, as regards the present crisis, to quote the testimony of the British Admiral, which is to this effect—“*The Turkish troops have behaved admirably, but religious fanaticism may possibly upset the great integrity which all other provocations have hitherto failed to do. Their conduct deserves their being treated as disciplined troops, in this respect second to none of the European nations.*”

All this comes of the piratical invasion of Crète by the Greeks, who went there, not to secure Cretan liberty—for that was already made certain—but to prevent Cretan autonomy, which of all things Greece most dreads. . . .

In fact, Colonel Vassos and his soldiers were sent to Crete not to obtain freedom for the Cretans, but to enforce the annexation of Crete to Greece. The whole proceedings of the Greek

Government were those of the public black-mailer. They tried to provoke a general war in the hopes of benefiting in the general scramble. They did their best to bribe Bulgaria and Servia into joining in their attack upon Turkey, and so setting all Macedonia in flames. The Great Powers had to exercise all their influence to keep Servia, Montenegro and Bulgaria quiet. The Greeks not only invaded Crete, but fired upon Turkish vessels there. When all these means failed to arouse a general conflagration, the Greeks played their last card, and forced a collision in Thessaly. It was simply the performance of a shrewd but hard-pressed gambler, who, being in a desperate case, stakes heavily upon a single throw, knowing that, even if he loses, his position will not be much worse.

It is a great misfortune for the Hellenic people that it has practically no aristocracy, and not even a stable plutocracy, to steady public opinion and to support the monarch and the government in time of peril at home or abroad. There is, in fact, nothing between the throne and the people. Greece has no second Legislative Chamber. The people unfortunately, so far as political influence goes, are represented by

the thoughtless, passionate and changeable mob of Athens. It is just the same blind and foolish populace that it was 2000 years ago, when the Athenians scoffed at the patriotic counsel and rejected the wise leadership of Demosthenes.

The majority of Greek politicians and legislators are men of straw, lawyers and journalists who regard and treat politics as a means of livelihood, and whose political action is principally guided by the self-interest or greed of the moment. Indeed, it is a common saying that the party that is in office for the time being in Greece makes the Opposition pay all the taxes and bear all the burdens of the State. It is not surprising, then, that the King should during his reign have had something over half a hundred different Ministries. It is a terrible misfortune for Greece, which she shares with most of the small Balkan States, that there is no settled wealthy or noble upper class out of which the country can find disinterested and patriotic leaders. The internal politics of all these little Balkan kingdoms and principalities are, therefore, most uncertain and chequered. Servia is quite as bad as Greece. Bulgaria is only a little better, because the temper and constitution of the Bulgarian people are more calm and tena-

cious than those of the Greeks and Serbs. Roumania is in a better condition because there is a powerful aristocracy in Roumania, and because the German Dynasty that reigns there has imported German organisation and stability.

It is a very moot question whether the creation of these little independent, or semi-independent, States south of the Danube has not been a serious drawback instead of an advantage to themselves and mankind at large. They certainly have disappointed the brilliant hopes that were entertained at first by the party of sentimentalism in this country, who welcomed their creation mainly because they called themselves "Christians." The average Greek, Servian and Bulgarian is Christian in nothing but the name. In addition to their internal revolutions, the gross corruption of their politicians and ministers, and to the hideous injustice with which they treat the other nationalities that live within their borders, these little States play the part of political firebrands. They always want more territory and more opportunities of plundering people and interests that do not belong to them. Greed of territory and desire for plunder were the principal causes of the Greek attack upon Turkey. It is question-

able whether Turkish rule is not better than Greek rule. If the population of Thessaly, Christians as well as Turks, could be polled without restraint or fear of subsequent results, it is very probable that a majority would vote for the rule of the Sultan in preference to that of the Greek government. The non-Greek inhabitants, to a man, prefer Turkish rule.

When people who are without knowledge exult over the establishment of these so-called Christian States out of the ruin of the Turkish Empire, they entirely overlook the fact that their establishment has always been marked by the most brutal cruelty, and often extermination, towards other races and creeds. Thus the Bulgarians after the Russian invasion ruthlessly drove out three-fourths, and practically destroyed one-half, of the peaceful Mussulman population of Bulgaria and Eastern Roumelia. Over a million of innocent Mahometans, mostly women and children, then perished.

Not satisfied even with this, the Bulgarians, who hate the Greeks even more than they do the Turks, drove by persecution out of their country a very large proportion of the Greek population also. It is well known that in Macedonia the Bulgarians and Greeks are far

more hostile to each other than they are to the ruling Turks, and that if the Turks were removed there would be an internecine war of extermination between Bulgarians, Greeks and Wallachs. The Servians celebrated their independence by brutally massacring the whole Turkish garrison and the Mussulman inhabitants of Belgrade.

After all, these unfortunate Mussulmans have just as much right to live and flourish and possess their lands and cultivate their crops as their "Christian" neighbours. They are far more temperate, honest, brave, patient, and industrious than the great majority of so-called Christians, who give themselves such airs of superiority, and whom their ignorant admirers in this country praise so recklessly. Why should a bad Christian be treated as more worthy of British favour than a good Mahometan? Christianity we all believe to be *the* religion, and to be capable of bringing the human race to a higher standard of morality and well-being than any other religion. But it must be a true and vivifying Christianity, not a bogus profession of faith, with no works to prove or illustrate its reality. When the Turks see in their towns and villages throughout Asia Minor the living victims of the awful Russian crusade of 1877-8

against their countrymen, is it any wonder that they should despise the inconsistency and hypocrisy of English Christians, who agitate against the Armenian atrocities of 1895, but who have never raised a voice against the far greater atrocities perpetrated by Christian Russians only twenty years ago?

When the net benefit to humanity at large of the setting up of these small "Christian" States is summed up, those who wish to strike a just balance must take into consideration the sufferings and doom of the peaceful and innocent Mussulman population. Crete has shown how Cretan Christians treat their Mussulman neighbours if they get the upper hand. The cruel massacre of the Turkish prisoners at Zeitoun, and the reckless bomb-throwing of the Armenian conspirators at Constantinople, show what Armenians can do if they get the upper hand. The wholesale massacre of Mussulmans by Gourko, Skobelev, Kaufmann, and other Russian leaders, shows how the most orthodox of Christian Great Powers can disgrace Christianity. I mention these facts to show that there are two sides to the question of Christian and Mussulman in the East, and that the Turk, with all his faults, has good reason for standing aghast at

the injustice and inconsistency of his Christian critics.

• No doubt there was a general idea abroad from September, 1895, down to the Turkish victories in April, 1897, that the Ottoman Empire was about to break up, that the Sick Man was in his last agonies, and that the heritage of the Ottomans would be divisible among its greedy rivals and subjects. • •

The anti-Turkish agitation in England, the hostile policy of the British Government, and the solemn warnings publicly addressed by Lord Salisbury to the Sultan and his Government did much to foster this impression. • The Greeks, who had never ceased regretting their inactivity in 1877-8, determined on this occasion not to lose their chance by delay. There are many who believe that secret encouragement was given to Greece from Russia. The close and intimate connection between the two royal families gave some colour to this belief. There are even those who believe that there was a Machiavellian plot on the part of Russia to set Turk and Greek by the ears, in order that the two chief anti-Slav and anti-Russian elements in the Balkan Peninsula might wear each other out. • •

I found suspicion and dislike of Russia and



Russia's influence universal among the Greeks, and it was generally said by them that but for Russian encouragement the war would not have been undertaken. The attitude of the Russian Government since the war hardly gives countenance to this idea, but Russian policy is so deep and so crooked that it is far from safe to deduce conclusions from outward signs.

My own theory so far as regards the action of Russia is as follows. It is sustained by many facts which will be found set out in the succeeding pages.

In 1892, when Mr. Gladstone came into office, affairs seemed favourable to Russia for the final assault upon the Ottoman Empire. For this to be successful at any time, the primary condition is a breach between England and Turkey. Russia has too keen a recollection of the tremendous and costly blunder she made in 1853, and of Lord Beaconsfield's triumph at Berlin in 1878, to risk an attack upon Turkey at a time when English support of Turkey is possible.

A widespread Armenian revolutionary conspiracy was therefore organised and subsidised in Russia, and even patronised by the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople. The aims of this most barbarous and wicked plot were made public

some time before its *dénouement*. Dr. Hamlin, the well-known American missionary, wrote in 1893 :

“An Armenian revolutionary party” is causing great evil and suffering to the missionary work and to the whole Christian population of certain parts of the Turkish Empire. It is a secret organisation, and is managed with a skill in deceit which is known only in the East.

A very intelligent Armenian gentleman assured me that “These Hintchakist bands, organised all over the Empire, will watch their opportunities to kill Turks and Kurds, set fire to their villages, and then make their escape into the mountains. The enraged Moslems will then rise and fall upon the defenceless Armenians, and slaughter them with such barbarities, that Russia will enter in the name of humanity and Christian civilization and take possession.”

I have made the mildest possible disclosure of only a few of the abominations of this Hintchakist revolutionary party. *It is of Russian origin—Russian gold and craft govern it.* Let all missionaries, home and foreign, denounce it. It is trying to enter every Sunday-school and deceive and pervert the innocent and ignorant into supporters of this craft. We must therefore be careful that, in befriending Armenians, we do nothing that can be construed into an approval of this movement, which all should abhor.

A very shrewd and able correspondent of Reuter's Agency, who travelled throughout the Armenian districts of Asia Minor, wrote in March, 1894 :—

The plan of the Armenian revolutionists was to provoke by the atrocities upon Mussulmans such cruelty, atrocity, outrage, butchery that Christian humanity would rise in

wrath. It will be the helpless women and children who will suffer most. The revolutionary leaders know that it will be so; in fact, they count upon it as the chief factor in their success.

The same correspondent wrote the remarkable prediction that the

chief attack will be made in the city of Constantinople itself, and that the brunt of the fighting will be borne by the Armenian residents therein.

These prophecies, written in March, 1894, were literally fulfilled in Sassun in July and August, 1894, and in Constantinople on September 30th, 1895.

Both of these predictions were made long before any of the outbreaks or massacres among the Turkish Armenians occurred—the Sassun revolt did not begin till July, 1894.

Shortly after the suppression of the Sassun revolt, with a trifling loss of life—some 262 Armenians perished—there sprang into noxious life a most tremendous and inexplicable atrocity campaign throughout Western Europe and America—but chiefly in the English press. There is always a large journalistic demand for atrocities—nothing makes more popular reading. This fact is an unwholesome sign of modern civilisation. The craving of many good, or

apparently good, persons, for the details of atrocities is very much akin to the craving of bad persons for offensive realities. Both desires show a warped or diseased bent of the human mind. But the extraordinary extent and development of the atrocity campaign between December, 1894, and October, 1895—that is, before any real atrocities to any appreciable extent had taken place—cannot be explained merely on the ground of journalistic anxiety to satisfy an unwholesome popular craving. It was the result of a carefully planned and organised propaganda, whose agents were in some cases mercenary, in others innocent though willing victims of deceit. All the stories and many of the telegrams originally came from the same persons and locality, and from the same organisation, viz., from a group of ingenious Armenian conspirators who were mostly inside the Russian frontier, between Karoungan and Tiflis. Some of these conspirators were on Turkish territory in and around Erzeroum itself. This atrocity agitation in England took almost the character of a crusade against Islam.

The procedure was much the same as that adopted by Russia regarding the Bulgarian atrocities in 1876. The object was the same,

the result identical—the alienation of English public feeling from Turkey, and the placing of the Ottoman Empire at the mercy of Russia. Russian policy was in 1895 directed by a very able and resolute statesman, Prince Lobanoff, a man who pursued the traditional and undeviating aim of Russia—to obtain Constantinople and the heritage of the Ottoman Empire. Prince Lobanoff was unscrupulous as to his methods; he was a genuine Russian, ambitious, patriotic, and determined to accomplish his end *per fas et nefas*. Russia has always had two strings to her bow—the one the absolute break-up of Turkey in such a way that Russia could seize the great prize of Constantinople; the other the forcing of Turkey into a condition of complete dependency upon Russia; so that in fact the Sultan, if his throne remained, should be nothing more than a vassal of the Czar. At one time Russia has used the first string, at another the second string. Either suits her purpose equally well. During the last twelve months of his life various circumstances, especially the action of the German Emperor, inclined the brilliant Russian Chancellor to prefer the second, that is, the *vassalage* string. He pursued his plan with such consummate ability that English public

opinion was alienated from Turkey by the Russian-fed atrocity campaign of 1894-5.

•One thing remained—to persuade the Sultan and the Turkish people that the English Government was also hostile to Turkey; as alienated, in fact, as English public opinion seemed to be. This was the task of M. Nelidoff at Constantinople, and the astute and experienced ambassador of the Russian Court effected his object with much adroitness and complete success. Unfortunately M. Nelidoff found in the British Envoy at the Porte a most useful, though unwittingly useful, instrument to his hand. •Nothing is more instructive in the whole history of diplomacy than the record of the way in which M. Nelidoff—aided to the full by the ingenuity of his colleague and ally, M. Cambon, the French Ambassador—drew Sir Philip Currie onward in the thorny and dangerous path of menace and coercion towards Turkey. From November, 1894, when the inquiry into the suppression of the Sassun revolt was demanded by our Ambassador, down to July, 1895, when Prince Lobanoff distinctly placed himself across the path of British intervention and told Lord Salisbury that such intervention would mean war with Russia, Sir Philip Currie was completely duped by the

Russian Ambassador. The greatest parade of an *entente* between Russia, France, and England for the coercion of Turkey was made both in public and private. An impossible, costly, and exasperating scheme of reforms was put forward under the assumed responsibility of Sir Philip Currie for Asia Minor. Both British Governments were led to believe that they could rely upon Russian co-operation in coercing the Sultan.

The effect of this ostentatious coercion of Turkey by England, in conjunction with Russia, the hereditary foe of the Ottoman Empire, and with France, the complacent henchman of Russia, naturally enough had an exceedingly mischievous effect upon the Mussulman subjects of the Sultan. Sir Philip Currie's "scheme of reforms," which would have tended to place the dominant Moslem majority under the Christian minority, much irritated Mussulman sentiment and prepared the way for the evil deeds of October, November, and December, 1895. Then, to the immense surprise and chagrin of the British Government, the Russian Chancellor issued his famous veto upon the advance of the fleets into the Sea of Marmora, which appeared so imminent towards the close of 1895.

Why, then, did the Russian Chancellor thus suddenly take Turkey under his wing, and apparently intervene to avert the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire? The answer is two-fold. First, it has always been the Russian policy to prevent genuine improvement in Turkey, to promote decay and corruption, till Turkey falls to pieces of internal weakness, and the Ottoman Empire drops like an over-ripe pear into Russian hands. Secondly, the last thing that Russia desires is to see other European Powers, least of all Great Britain, take an active part in the practical settlement of the fate of the *disjecta membra* of a moribund Turkey. The British Fleet at Constantinople would enable England to have a large, if not a predominant, voice in the settlement of the future. Hence Russia has done, and will always do, all in her power to keep the British fleet away from Constantinople. Russia will postpone the fall of Turkey till Russia, and Russia alone, holds the settlement in her hands. Lord Salisbury has made no secret of his annoyance at the artifices of M. Nelidoff. That diplomatist, in a conversation with me at Constantinople in May, expressed himself as very anxious to disprove Lord Salisbury's suspicions, and to regain his good opinion.



The part played by Germany in the affairs of Turkey during the past three years has been very important. It is the fashion in this country to abuse German policy, and to deride the German Emperor. Such is a foolish, and, in my opinion, an unjustifiable fashion—for, excepting the unfortunate telegram to President Kruger, which no one regrets more than his German Majesty himself, the foreign policy of the Kaiser has been prudent, patriotic, and peace-preserving. Indirectly also German policy has maintained British interests in the East. But for the steadying influence of German policy, Europe would in all probability have ere this been in flames. The Ottoman Empire would have been partitioned, and partitioned in a way most dangerous, if not fatal, to British naval and political ascendancy in the Mediterranean and in the East.

To understand German policy in the East it is necessary to go back to the period of the late Czar's death. Then there was a curious outburst of Russophile writing in a portion of the English Press. The warm reception given to the Prince of Wales at St. Petersburg was magnified into the beginning of a new era of British alliances, when Russia should take the place of Germany, and England and Russia should arrange the

affairs of Europe and Asia between them. German suspicion was naturally aroused. The British alliance is, and must be, a valued factor, so long as Europe is divided into two such evenly poised camps as the Russo-French League and the German monarchies.

Any signs that the British alliance is going to the opposite side at once produces nervousness and irritation in Germany. This irritation, begun by the attitude of the English Press at the time of Alexander III.'s death in 1894, was increased by the ostentatious way in which British policy at Constantinople was worked in co-operation with Russia and France. To this friction the Kaiser's unfortunate telegram to President Kruger was partially due.

The German Government realised most keenly that the disappearance of Turkey would seriously affect the balance of power in Europe, disturb European peace, and imperil the safety of the German monarchies. The wisest heads in Austria have felt this for many years past. Accordingly, German policy was actively directed towards counter-working the intrigues for the destruction of Turkey or for the submerging of Ottoman independence into a Russian satrapy. There is reason to believe that, on Prince

Lobanoff's untimely death—over which Mr. Gladstone, owing to Armenian influences, exulted—the war party got the upper hand at the Russian Court, and a *coup de main* upon the Bosphorus was imminent. The idea of the Russian War Office, for some years past, has been to land a large force suddenly upon the North-East corner of the Thracian Chersonese, so as to seize Derkos, command the water supply of Constantinople, and take the forts that guard the Bosphorus in the rear.

An intimation was conveyed to St. Petersburg that Germany and Austria would not permit the dismemberment of Turkey without war. This gave pause to the triumphant war party in Russia, who had overborne the well-meaning resistance of the young and amiable Czar. The *coup de main* upon Constantinople was abandoned or postponed. Henceforth it became a race between Germany and Russia for the alliance of the Turkish Government in order to secure the military strength of the Ottomans.

This race Germany has won, not from want of any skill or any efforts on the part of the Russian Ambassador, but because the odds of the position were so overwhelmingly against him. The suspicion and hatred felt by the Turks

towards the Russians is of long standing and well grounded. Russia has been the traditional enemy and persecutor of Turkey, and every sane Turk knows this. The bitter memories of the last Russian crusade, when massacre, outrage, and every form of barbarous cruelty were inflicted by the Russian armies upon the Turkish Mussulmans, are still fresh. Not all M. Nelidoff's diplomatic ingenuity could balance these most powerful and just prejudices. Moreover, it is well known that Germany, unlike Russia, seeks no territorial or even direct political aggrandisement at the expense of Turkey. Germany does not expect to get a slice of Asia Minor, or the control of the Straits, still less the possession of Constantinople. The military alliance of Turkey and some commercial privileges, the latter as good for Turkey as for her German friends, satisfy German desires, and these Turkey is most ready to give. M. Nelidoff therefore soon found German influence preponderating at the Palace and the Porte. His coming retirement, whether it be voluntary or under orders, is probably due to this sense of failure. German influence has been strongly thrown on the Turkish side, which was also the side of justice and international legality, during the Cretan troubles and

the crisis preceding the Turco-Greek war. Russia has also to a large extent supported Turkey since the beginning of Greek active intervention. The remarkable phraseology of the Czar's telegram to the Sultan urging the cessation of hostilities shows how anxious the Russian Government has been to avoid giving any offence to the Sultan. The following is the official text of the telegram sent by the Czar to the Sultan from Tsarkoe-Selo on May 17th :

Your Imperial Majesty will not be surprised if the *relations of sincere friendship and the neighbourly feeling existing between us* induce me to appeal to your noblest sentiments and inspire me with the firm hope that you will not fail to crown the successes achieved by your valiant armies in a heroic struggle by a faithful adherence to the moderate and pacific intentions which your Majesty proclaimed at the beginning of the war. By arresting immediately the movement of your troops in Greece, and by giving a favourable reception to the mediation of the great Powers for the establishment of peace your Imperial Majesty would acquire a fresh title to the high esteem which you enjoy, and accomplish an act of profound wisdom, of which I, personally, should for ever retain a remembrance.

I beg your Imperial Majesty to believe in my unchanging friendship.

NICHOLAS.

This telegram has horrified our Turcophobes ; but international courtesy is rarely thrown away, especially in dealing with Oriental potentates. This truth Sir Philip Currie has persistently

ignored, and British influence at Constantinople has proportionately and lamentably declined. Germany has saved the Ottoman Empire. The Turks of all classes realise this, and are grateful for it. Everything in Turkey is now pro-German. The words "Allemania" or "Alleman" are quite enough to secure a warm welcome for those who use them. The favourite oath in Asia Minor after the Crimean War was "by the word of an Englishman." That has now, alas! all disappeared. English influence has, under the blunders of the past three years, sunk to zero; German influence is everywhere in the ascendant.

Mr. Bigham tells a good story *apropos* of this :

I remember once riding into Larissa late at night, with a Circassian trooper as escort, and as we came to the gate in the dark we were challenged. "Who goes there?" cried the sentry. "Alleman Pasha," gratuitously yelled out my man. I called out "Ben Ingilizim" (I am English). The gate was opened, and we rode in and found the guard turned out. I asked the lieutenant why, expecting that the five brevets conferred on me by my trooper were the reason. Not a bit of it. "Effendim," he said, "I turned out the guard because I thought you were German."

Germany has gained much by this wise and far-sighted policy, a policy as wise and far-sighted as our reckless atrocity-mongering and wholesale reviling of the Sultan and the Turks have been blind and stupid. For, in the event of

a European war, the splendid fighting force of Turkey on the German side would mean the paralysis of quite half the Russian army; that is, it would mean victory for German arms. On the other hand, in a struggle for dominion in the East between Russia and England, if Russia were to get control of the Turkish fighting force, it would mean to England the loss of India.

The Greek attack upon Turkey was therefore but a portion of the general onslaught which had been carefully planned and arranged since July, 1892. Various circumstances, which I have summarised above, prevented Russia from joining in that attack, and kept Bulgaria and Servia from moving. The overweening vanity and recklessness of the Greeks, and the irresponsible ambition of Greek politicians prevented them from realising the change which took place in the European situation in July and August, 1896. They drifted along blindly and wildly from blunder to blunder, aided, no doubt, by the weaknesses of the so-called European Concert, and relying upon the encouragement, or supposed encouragement, given them by Russia. So the Greeks crossed the Rubicon and burned their boats. German influence, above all, averted a general war and saved the Ottoman Empire.

## CHAPTER III.

## THE POSITION OF AUSTRIA.

FEELING, therefore, that great injustice had been done to Turkey, and being desirous to see with my own eyes the condition and conduct of the Turkish army, I went out to Macedonia. I left England on April 14th for Salonica, taking with me my eldest son, a boy of sixteen, and went *via* Germany and Austria to Salonica, the Turkish base of operations. On my way I stopped a day in Vienna, and there had a very interesting conversation with Count Goluchowski, the Austro-Hungarian Minister for Foreign Affairs. The Eastern Question has a closer interest for Austria than for any other European Power. The possession of Constantinople by Russia would mean ruin to Austria-Hungary. There is, indeed, a party in Austria that would consider the possession of Salonica by Austria, and the extension of the Austrian dominion over the countries lying between Bosnia and Salonica, as sufficient compensation for a Russian occupation of Constantinople.



This would, however, involve not only the conquest of Macedonia, but also of Albania, by Austria. The power that tries to subjugate the Arnauts, one of the fiercest and most warlike races in the world, will find the task a desperate one.

With Russia in Constantinople, the Austrian Empire would be almost enveloped by the advancing Slavs. Russia would find it easy to use both Bulgarians and Serbs, first to worry and then to attack Austria-Hungary. The enormous increase of power, both by sea and land, that Russia would gain by the possession of Constantinople, would place Austria at a complete disadvantage in the Mediterranean as well as in the Balkan Peninsula.

Moreover the Austrian advocates of an exchange of Salonica for Constantinople overlook one great factor in the game, which is also ignored by our English Russophiles. It is that the possession of Constantinople by Russia would mean the control of the Ottoman army by Russia. The Turkish soldiers are the finest fighting men in the world. Under first-class European officers they would represent a power almost invincible. Therefore, in addition to the political and naval strength that Russia would gain by an occupation

of Constantinople, she would acquire such an increase of military force as would place the Austrian Empire at her mercy. For the same reason the defence of India against a combined Russian and Turkish attack would be almost impossible.

These considerations have always weighed most heavily with Austrian statesmen, although a young and ill-informed party now favour the exchange. It is true that Austria was bought off in 1877 to allow the Russian invasion of Turkey in exchange for Bosnia and Herzegovina; but when it came to a question of Constantinople, Austria vigorously supported Lord Beaconsfield in his resolve to rescue that matchless capital from the grasp of the Russian army encamped at San Stefano in 1878.

The story of Russian and Austrian relations between 1875 and 1878 is one of the most curious and instructive in diplomacy. Prince Bismarck has in his recent revelations exposed one of the most memorable and infamous of political intrigues.\* In 1875 the German Chancellor received a private and autograph letter from the Emperor Alexander II. of Russia, pro-

\* *Vide Standard*, Nov. 6, 1896. Extract from the *Neue Freie Presse*.

posing a joint attack upon, and partition of, Austria. Russia was to get Galicia, Austrian Poland, and something more. Germany was to make her own terms. The excuse for this act of shameful aggression was that the Russian Army was fretting for employment, as twenty years had passed since its last engagement in the Crimea. This was in fact the precise reason always given by the Matabele kings for an attack upon some unoffending tribe. The young warriors had to "wash their spears in blood." A similar proposal was made through the German Ambassador at St. Petersburg, Prince Reuss. Prince Bismarck declined the immoral offer and recalled Prince Reuss, who had favoured it. Nothing more was heard of this fine scheme at Berlin till the end of 1876, when Prince Bismarck learned that Austria had been approached and arranged with by Russia, and that the Russian arms were to be turned against Turkey instead of against Austria. Probably some knowledge of this plot reached Lord Derby, then Foreign Minister. This accounted for his point-blank refusal to have anything to do with the notorious Berlin memorandum addressed to Turkey. Probably too the Turkish Government had information that Russia meant

war in any case. This may explain the determination shown by the Turks, and the failure of Lord Salisbury's mission to Constantinople early in 1877.

Accordingly the Bulgarian atrocities were arranged by Russian agents. A rising was with great difficulty stirred up among the Bulgarians near Philippopolis—Bulgaria was a most flourishing and well-governed country. Horrible cruelties were perpetrated upon the Mussulman villagers, especially upon the Moslem women, by their Christian neighbours. Then came the desired reprisals. General Ignatieff, the adroit Russian Ambassador at Constantinople, advised that the local militia should be called out to repress the Bulgarian rising. This was the worst step that could have been taken. The local militia were mostly Pomaks, or Mussulman Bulgarians, between whom and the Christian Bulgarians there was the same deadly feud that prevails between Cretan Christians and Cretan Mussulmans. This traditional feud was intensified by the barbarities wrought by the insurgents early in 1876 upon the Mussulman inhabitants.

Retaliation followed, in some cases cruel and excessive; but it was nothing like the extent which the tremendous exaggerations in the

English Press represented,—many of these due to correspondents in Russian pay. 30,000 Bulgarians were said to have perished, whereas the total number was about 1200. The excuse was, however, given. A great English party, led by an indiscreet and short-sighted rhetorician, fell into the trap. The whole business was instigated, carried through, and paid for by Russia.

Mr. Gladstone and his friends could not sufficiently extol “the knightly crusade” and “the civilising mission” of Russia. Nor could they find encomiums enough wherewith to bespatter “the Divine Figure from the North.” Yet Alexander II. was, with his Ministers and agents, the deliberate author of the massacres, atrocities, and general pandemonium of blood and fire and human agony into which the Russian invasion of Turkey plunged the Balkan Peninsula. All these horrors were provoked in order that the ambitious soldiers of Russia might obtain their desired military exercise and glory. Now the amiable young Czar, Nicolas II., is denounced by the same clique because he will not turn Europe topsy-turvy to please them.

Nothing in modern times has equalled, nothing has approached, the ruin, carnage and horrors inflicted upon a peaceful and innocent

population by that Russian crusade. Before the war there were over two millions of Mussulman inhabitants in Bulgaria and Eastern Roumelia. There are now only some 550,000. The remainder perished by the sword or from cold and starvation during their flight, for the survivors were driven in helpless exile into Asia Minor. The barbarities inflicted by the Russians and Bulgarians upon the Mussulmans that fell into their hands were in amount and in quality worse than any recorded since the fall of the Roman Empire, or since the devastation of Europe by the Huns. Whole villages were destroyed with all their inhabitants, in many cases the Mussulmans, men, women and children, being thrown back into the flames by the bayonets of their persecutors. In one case 100,000 Mussulman refugees, encamped near Hermanli, on the Maritza, were, in January, 1878, driven by Skobelev's cavalry and artillery into the frozen Rhodope mountains. Not 5000 survived. Lest these statements should be thought exaggerated, I give in Appendix II. some proofs.\* These could be greatly multiplied if space allowed. The treatment of the Mussulman women was peculiarly

\* Appendix II. Extract from Correspondent of *Daily News* with Russian Army, December, 1877, etc., etc.

horrible and brutal, many being carried off by force from their villages and placed in the travelling brothels that accompanied the Russian army.

It must be remembered that many of these terrible deeds were done under the eyes of the highest Russian officers and with their knowledge. General Gourko was a conspicuous offender. His raid across the Balkans, in the summer of 1877, had no military object. He gave full licence to his soldiery, especially to the Bulgarian legion, to treat the Turkish inhabitants as they pleased. His track through the beautiful Tunja valley, famous for its fertility and attar of roses, was marked by smoking villages, murdered men and outraged women. The fate of the hapless Mussulmans of Kezanlik and Oflanlik is too horrible to narrate.\* The object of Gourko's cruel raid was to stir up the Turks to furious reprisal, and so to keep alive the atrocity-mania in England, which had been so serviceable to Russian ambition. The Armenian atrocities of October, November and December, 1895, are trifling in number and less in horror, compared with those wrought by Christian soldiers upon Mussulmans in the Balkan Peninsula in 1877-8. And in several cases the

\* This will be found described in Appendix III.

recent official despatches state that the Armenian horrors were commenced by "Bulgarians" and "Circassians," both, be it noted, Mussulman victims of Russian persecution and cruelty. So in both cases the innocent suffer, and suffer cruelly. In the Balkans first Mussulmans and then Christians, and finally Mussulmans, are the victims of hideous outrage and massacre. In the wilds of Turkish Armenia first Mussulmans, and then Christians on a more terrible scale, are the victims of race and religious fanaticism. But in both cases the original instigation and cause are the same—that unvarying, unscrupulous, merciless ambition of the great Russian Hierarchy, military and civil, which never shrinks from pursuing by any means its consistent policy of aggression towards Constantinople on the one side and towards India on the other.

There is a remarkable resemblance between the Russian methods in Bulgaria and in Armenia, and between the way in which English public opinion has been "bulldozed" and misled in both cases. Fortunately, in the latter case, other powerful influences have supervened to save Turkey from direct Russian invasion. The follies of British prejudice and of British policy have thus been neutralized, not only to the



salvation of Turkey, but also to the great benefit of England and the British Empire.

This has been rather a digression, but a necessary one to enable the true course of events and their influence to be properly gauged. To return now to Austria. In 1877 Austria was won over by the promise of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Russian attack upon Turkey was therefore allowed to proceed. Roumania in vain appealed to Austria for support against the Russian invasion, and was finally obliged to lend the Russian autocrat the use of her army at the critical moment after the first Russian repulse from Plevna. The Russian flank and communications—so vulnerable in their long extent from Bessarabia, through Roumania, Bulgaria and Eastern Roumelia, to San Stefano—were left by Austria unthreatened. It was only on the threshold of Constantinople itself that Austrian influence gave Russia any pause.

The *dénouement* came at Berlin in June, 1878. Having been through Eastern Roumelia and seen the extreme weakness of the Russian forces at Adrianople, Philippopolis, Sofia and all along the Rhodope Mountains, I went to Berlin to do what I could to prevent Philippopolis and Sofia from falling under Russian control. The

Russians had played the game of bluff with consummate audacity. They had pushed the Imperial Guard and almost every available man and gun on to San Stefano, within seven miles of Constantinople. They then invited the military attachés of all the European Powers to see reviews of the Russian "vanguard." The vanguard was imposing enough. There were some 50,000 of the cream of the Russian army, with a fine artillery. But the vanguard was practically the Russian army. There was hardly anything behind it. At Adrianople there were barely 4000 Russian soldiers; at Philippopolis there were not 3000.

Every device was adopted to conceal the real paucity of the Russian numbers from visitors. Count Stolopin, Prince Gortschakoff's son-in-law and Governor-General of Roumelia, told me himself that he had *three battalions* at the important outpost of Peshtera on the edge of the Rhodope. There were only *two companies* at Peshtera. When at dinner there with a Russo-Turkish Commission, which was going to examine into the Rhodope rising, there were only three officers at mess. I said to the President, "Most of your comrades are away on outpost duty, I suppose." He replied

incautiously, "No, only one is absent." This meant of course that there were only two companies. The Russian Major in charge of the Commission gave his comrade a warning kick under the table; but he kicked me instead of the Russian Mess President. I laughed out loud, and the game of concealment, so far as I was concerned, was abandoned.

Lord Beaconsfield knew the vulnerability of the Russians, and he wished to give Russia a blow that would have crippled her for fifty years, and have cost this country a very trifling sacrifice of blood and treasure. But Lord Beaconsfield was unhappily overruled in his own cabinet by a majority too short-sighted and too prejudiced to understand the gravity of the interests at stake, the unique value of the opportunity, and the perils of delay.

Mehemet Ali was the first Turkish Plenipotentiary at the Berlin Congress. He was an able man, a good general, and much superior in general knowledge to most of the then Turkish Pashas. Mehemet Ali had been in command in the Lom, where he had constantly defeated the Russian army under the Cesarewitch, afterwards Alexander III. At the battles of Karahassankoi and Popkoi, Mehemet Ali had chased

the Russians like haves. He was recalled by the malign influence of Mahmoud Damat—the Sultan's brother-in-law and the evil genius of Turkey during that war—just as he was about to give the Cesarewitch the final *coup*. I knew Mehemet Ali well, and many a time did he lament the lost opportunities of Turkey during that eventful struggle.

I lunched with him at Berlin on the first day of the Congress, and asked him how affairs were going for Turkey. Mehemet Ali leaned forward and covered his face with his hands; and, after a pause of several seconds, he looked up at me and replied with great sadness, "Ah, mon ami, tout est perdu; l'Autriche nous a vendu." He had just learned that Russia had bought Austrian neutrality by the offer of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and that Turkey would have to make great sacrifices in order to secure peace. Poor Mehemet Ali! He did his best for Turkey at Berlin. Shortly afterwards he was sent on a mission to Prizrend, where the Albanians were in semi-revolt. There he and his whole escort were massacred by the fanatical Arnauts, it is said through treachery. Mehemet Ali's end was very like that of Sir Louis Cavagnari and his escort at Kabul.

Knowing how much the fate of Turkey depended upon Austrian policy, I determined if possible to see the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister on my way out. Count Goluchowski had been so good as to give me an appointment on my way back from Constantinople in January last. But, owing to an unexpected delay in Constantinople, I just missed it by eight hours, the time being 12 o'clock on Friday, Jan. 15th. The Count had to leave for Berlin that evening, and I did not reach Vienna till 8 P.M. This is mentioned because a curious story hangs upon it. On my return to London I was told by a well-informed person, who has a large secret service at his command, that my delay in Constantinople had been arranged by M. Nelidoff, the Russian Ambassador, in order to prevent my seeing Count Goluchowski. I cannot say whether this story was true or not, but I was undoubtedly detained two days in Constantinople, in a very unexpected and inexplicable way, by the representations of a person, in high favour at the Palace, and supposed to be very Russophile in his tendencies. These representations were afterwards proved to be wholly frivolous, and to have been made on very insufficient grounds.

I had followed with care the line taken by Austria during the crisis in Crete and Greece, and I had been much struck by the wise prevision shown by Count Goluchowski. Even our own blue books make this clear. Austria, being close to the scene of operations and having the deepest interest in preserving the peace of Europe, was well informed as to the conspiracies and ambitions that threatened the general peace. Austria then knew of the action of the now notorious Greek secret society, the *Ethnike Hetairia*, and of the secret backing which the Greek Government gave to the dangerous intrigues of that conspiracy. Accordingly, so long ago as July, 1896, Count Goluchowski proposed to the other European Powers to place a naval cordon round Crete, in order to keep out the threatened in-pouring of agitators and rifles, which the *Ethnike Hetairia* had prepared. All the Great Powers readily accepted this wise precaution, which would have nipped the Cretan agitation in the bud, and would have prevented the internecine and bloody strife in Crete itself. In all human probability the Austrian proposal would also have averted the war in Thessaly.

Unfortunately, the British Government took a contrary view, and under the influence of a

little splutter of Hellenophile and Radical agitation in this country, declined to join the other Powers in the naval cordon proposed by Austria for August last. That was a fatal deference to popular agitation, the importance of which was vastly overrated. It did no good, not even to the English Ministry that lost so good an opportunity of checking the secret conspiracy and the warlike movement in Greece, for Crete had to be blockaded later, when the blockade was too late to be of advantage. The delay certainly did not benefit Crete, for that island was turned into a perfect pandemonium of blood and ruin. The arrival of the 300 agitators and the 15,000 rifles, sent with impunity by the Ethnike Hetairia in the autumn of 1896, and the subsequent invasion of Colonel Vassos, were fatal to Crete. Count Goluchowski himself said to Sir Edmund Monson, the British Ambassador, in August, 1896, as reported in the Blue Book :—

EXTRACT FROM DESPATCH OF SIR E. MONSON TO  
THE MARQUIS OF SALISBURY.

(No. 438.)

Vienna, Aug. 1st, 1896.

Count Goluchowski told me that, seeing that it is clear that, unless effectual measures are taken to stop the introduction of arms, ammunition, and volunteers from Greece, the insurrection will continue in full force, one of two things must be the result : either the malcontents will have

their own way, and the island be annexed to Greece or become independent, or the Turks, with whom it would not be fair to interfere further, will put down the Christian movement as they choose.

Count Goluchowski cannot doubt that Her Majesty's Government must be as honestly anxious as the Governments of the other Powers to avert the serious danger with which the continuation of the present situation in Crete threatens the maintenance of the peace of Europe, and *he is therefore at a loss to understand how considerations of Parliamentary tactics can be allowed to interfere with the primary and essential object of preserving the accord of the Powers, and employing it to extinguish the beginning of a fire which, unless vigorously stamped out now, will burst out into flame throughout all South-Eastern Europe. To use the common French proverb, *qui veut la fin, veut les moyens*, and in his view no consideration of home politics can have weight against the incalculably serious consequences of a general outbreak of hostilities.—[Turkey, No. 7. 1896. C—8193.]*

A very curious statement, though very possibly accurate, is made by Mr. W. B. Harris, in *Blackwood's Magazine* for August. He says that both the King of Greece and M. Delyannis ran the risk of mobilising the Greek army, because they expected to be checked by a European blockade. The following is taken from Mr. Harris's article :—

The rumours of the blockade grew stronger and stronger, and one day the king received what he believed to be abso-



lute and authentic information that it had been decided upon by the Powers. He saw his opportunity and took it. A crowd larger and more formidable than ever had gathered in the public square. Suddenly the king, surrounded by the members of his family, appeared on the balcony and delivered a speech more warlike almost than any of those with which Delyannis has been charming the ears of the people. "We are all prepared for war," he said; "everything is ready. I myself will take the field at the head of 300,000 Greeks." The enthusiasm was enormous, and the security—temporary, at any rate—of the dynasty was assured. Yet when the King spoke those words he felt certain that there would be no war. The speech that he would make when he should next address them from the balcony was already sketched out. In sight of the men-of-war of the Powers, lying at Phalerum and the Piræus he would say, "I did my best to make war. I myself was going with my army to the front, and, if it had not been for the enmity of Europe, who is protecting the barbarian Turk, we should to-day all be *en route* for Constantinople."

Two more good opportunities of timely action were also lost by the British Cabinet. The first was that of intercepting Colonel Vassos' troops before they landed; the second was the blockade, or partial blockade, of Greece. This also was proposed by Austria, when the Greek Government began to mobilise its armies in Thessaly. "A blockade of the Piræus, the port of Athens, and of Volo, the Port of Thessaly,

would have been sufficient to prevent the Greek mobilisation in Thessaly, for the land routes from Athens are long and very difficult. But the same want of decision and paralysis of action seemed to hang over the English Cabinet, and prevented timely intervention.

This apparent weakness and undoubted delay on our part, caused great irritation among the European Governments, which found its expression in severe criticism of the policy of the British Cabinet in a large section of the Continental Press. So much surprise did this vacillation of the English Cabinet cause abroad that it was attributed not to Lord Salisbury himself, but to his colleagues. When we are disposed to resent this criticism as unjust or even as unfounded, it should not be forgotten that the peoples of the Continent have a far more intimate knowledge of the perils and horrors of war than the English people possess, and that, consequently, they have a more lively dread of and resentment for any temporising or feebleness that may precipitate war. To this same want of knowledge and experience may be attributed the extraordinary ignorance of foreign affairs and of the true importance of international relations that characterises the

great bulk of the English press and the majority of English politicians. Continental nations have learnt by a bitter experience the gravity and vital import to them of foreign affairs. Hence the Continental press and Continental opinion are far less moved by sentiment and humanitarianism than are the British press and British public feeling. French, German, and Austrian sentiment are much more guided by the material interests of France, Germany, and Austria than is English sentiment by the practical interests of England. The truth is that Continental peoples cannot afford to be so ignorant, so disinterested, or so reckless in dealing with their foreign relations as her insular security has enabled England to be, though even in the case of England this recklessness has not been practised without considerable Nemesis.

This time I made sure of my interview with the Austrian Foreign Minister. It was arranged privately with Count Goluchowski's Chief of Cabinet, M. de Méry, an able and acute secretary. The Ball Platz is the site of the Austrian Foreign Office, and there we were taken by the politest of ushers through several fine rooms into a splendid saloon, adorned with the por-

traits of Austrian emperors and with a striking picture of the ill-fated Crown Prince Rudolph. Here I left Ellis, whom I made a point of taking everywhere with me, in order that he might not lose the opportunities of seeing persons who play a great part in the history of the world, and of observing places and ceremonies of interest. M. de Méry then took me into the cabinet of the Minister, where I had a long interview (forty-five minutes) with Count Goluchowski. The Austrian Foreign Minister is a pleasant-looking man of about fifty, with bright blue eyes, grey hair, and a broad and intellectual forehead. He has a genial smile, is well favoured, and has the air of a *bon viveur*. Count Goluchowski is a wealthy Polish landowner of Galicia, and is said to be a keen Roman Catholic. He was therefore reported to be opposed to English interests, but I found no trace of such antagonism—rather the reverse. He was exceedingly polite, and expressed much pleasure at seeing me. Count Goluchowski does not speak English, but French fluently; so we talked in French. He expressed strong condemnation of the conduct of Greece, both in Crete and on the mainland, and agreed with me that the attitude of the Greek Government was

an attempt to blackmail Europe. He did not hesitate to say that the English Government had brought about a very serious state of affairs in Crete by delay and by refusing to join in the naval cordon proposed by Austria in August, 1896, and also by refusing to join in the blockade of Volo and the Piræus, proposed when the Greeks began to mobilise in Thessaly. Count Goluchowski believed that the peace of Europe would be preserved this year, as all the great Powers wished for peace.

In reply to a question of mine, he expressed his belief that Russia now sincerely wished for peace. Although in the past Russia had always pursued a policy of intrigue and disturbance in Turkey, now her policy was different. Russia, said the Count, had found on calculation that she had not gained so much as she anticipated by the last attack upon Turkey, which had cost her hundreds of thousands of men and much money. The liberation of the Bulgarians had not resulted in great advantage for Russia, as the Bulgarians were very independent. Count Goluchowski seemed to me to underrate Russia's gains by the last war, for undoubtedly Turkey was greatly weakened by it. Russia gained Batoum and Kars, and also the dominion of the

Black Sea, and drove the Turks out of the best part of the Balkan Peninsula. The Count spoke very contemptuously of the Greek army, and said the Turks would easily deal with the Greeks on land. He seemed to think that one battle would suffice to settle the Greeks, and that such a single fight might be the best way of quieting the spirit of aggression which had mastered the Greek Government and people. The danger of a war was that the Turkish Bashi-Bazouks, especially the Arnauts, might commit atrocities upon the Greek population afterwards. Count Goluchowski spoke very freely against the present Palace system in Turkey. He said it was very unfortunate, even for the Sultan himself; for as everything was done from the Palace, the Sultan was held responsible for all that went wrong, even for the Armenian massacres. This system had gone far to destroy the capable governing class of Turkey. Count Goluchowski also criticised English methods and policy. He thought English Ministers paid too much attention to popular agitation; and this in foreign questions prevented England from having a consistent and resolute policy abroad. Count Goluchowski believed the Cretan question could be settled without very much trouble; and

that the islanders would be quite satisfied with their own self-government, so soon as they understood that Europe really meant their good. The Count gave me a very interesting *résumé* of European politics, of which he took a broad view, and of which he evidently was a complete master. He said that Austrian public opinion was most friendly to England, and that if English policy were clear and not shifting, Austria could always work with England, their interests being so similar. On the subject of Germany the Count was naturally reticent; but I rather gathered, more from his tone than from any direct statement, that there was a *rapprochement* between the Emperors of Germany, Russia, and Austria, and that France was somewhat isolated. Count Goluchowski was exceedingly genial and friendly. He asked Ellis several questions as to his knowledge of warfare and weapons, and finally said "Good-bye" to him in English. He wished us plenty of adventures and all good fortune on our expedition.

After a visit to the British Ambassador at Vienna, Sir Horace Rumbold, we went down the Danube from Vienna to Buda-Pesth by steamer. It is a splendid trip, with ever-varying scenery,

and the boat was most comfortable. This Danube passage is in every way, except time, superior to the railway journey, and every one who can spare a whole day—it takes from 7 A.M. to 7 P.M.—should give preference to the river. The view of Gran, the premier Archiepiscopate of Hungary, with its glittering castle on the lofty rock overhanging the Danube, is the most striking scene; but there are scores of lovely and grand points of view which delight the eye. At Buda-Pesth we spent the night, and had a long and very interesting conversation with my old friend, Professor Arminius Vambéry, of Buda-Pesth. No man in Europe has so thorough and so just a knowledge of Turkey, and of the whole Eastern Question, as this remarkable linguist, philologist, and historian. No man has done more to warn Englishmen against the plots of Russia and the dangers from Russian aggression than Professor Vambéry. M. Vambéry is the only European who has spoken to the Sultan in his own language and alone. He speaks Turkish fluently, and the purest and most scholarly Turkish. M. Vambéry has often been the guest of the Sultan at Yildiz, and has often been consulted by His Majesty. He has accomplished the greatest feat ever done by a non-Mussulman—made the



pilgrimage to Mecca disguised as an Arab sheikh, and escaped detection. Only one other, the famous Sir Richard Burton, has ever achieved this most perilous and difficult deed. He has also done important work for the British Government. M. Vambéry was aghast at the frenzy and folly shown by English public opinion during the past eighteen months. He seemed to think that the Sultan and the Turkish Government were most seriously estranged from England, and that Russia practically had the whole game in her hands. Mr. and Mrs. H. M. Stanley were also there, and very entertaining as always. Mr. Stanley's last words to me were, spoken of course in jest, "You are sure to be captured by the Greeks"—a prediction at which we laughed, but which was curiously verified.

We left Buda-Pesth on Sunday morning, and travelled straight through to Salonica. I made all possible inquiries in passing through Belgrade and Servia, but could hear no evidences of any Servian mobilization, though one Servian officer told me the army was so well prepared that it could be mobilised in forty-eight hours. We passed the battle-field of Alexinatz in the early morning, where twenty-one years before I

had been nearly shot by the Turkish outposts when out reconnoitring with Colonel Popoff. The high hill of Djunis, where I had watched with Tchernaiëff the attack of the Turks, and seen them march up the steep slope like lions, carrying everything before them, stood out boldly against the grey sky. How many things had happened since then ! How many a gallant soul had been sent untimely to its last account ! What awful crimes had filled the Balkan valleys with dire agony ! What would be the outcome of this conflict just threatening ? Would the savage and tenacious Bulgarians remain quiet ? Would Servia, with her excitable and reckless population, hold back ? I remembered how M. Stoiloff, the Bulgarian Premier, had assured me in January last that he and his people wished to be friends with Turkey, and dreaded Russia far more than they did the Turks. M. Stoiloff then spoke in a far from friendly way of Greece and of Greek ambition. He told me a remarkable story, which I had never heard before, how he and Stamboulloff had, after the retirement of Alexander of Battenberg, offered the Bulgarian crown to the Sultan. The Padishah was prevented by Russia from accepting it, just as the King of Roumania was estopped by Austria.

from taking the same embarrassing honour. The object of the Bulgarian statesmen was to bind Turkey and Bulgaria together, the Sultan as Bulgarian king holding the same relative position to Bulgaria that the Austrian Emperor holds to Hungary, as the Hungarian king. It was a bold plan, and it is a pity that it was not tried.

We passed through Nisch, which was Turkish when I last visited it, but is now Servian, in the bright morning, and found the scenery through the wild borderland very grand and beautiful. At Zibeftché, the frontier station, the station-master, a fine old Ottoman, was very friendly and polite. On hearing my name, which is well known to the Turks as that of a friend, he at once passed our luggage through the Customs without the usual trouble. He then invited us and the Servian station-master, who had come in with our train, to have coffee with him. There we sat for some time and talked over the last Servo-Turkish campaign, that of 1876, the close of which I had witnessed. Oddly enough, the Turkish station-master had been with Abdul Kerim's army at Alexinatz, and the Servian station-master had been under Tcherhaieff. They were neither friendly to the Greeks.

After leaving Zibestché, at every station we came upon bodies of Turkish volunteers who were going to Salonica and on to the front. They were in high spirits, and were warmly welcomed by Mussulman gatherings at the different stations along the line. At Uskub, which is the chief town of Northern Macedonia and a railway junction, the station was crowded with Albanian and Turkish volunteers. There was much excitement to know the news, and all sorts of wild reports were current. One man said the Melouna Pass was forced; another that Tournavos was taken; a third that the Turks were in Larissa. It was Monday, the 19th, and Edhem Pasha had not yet descended from the mountain boundaries, where the first two days' fighting took place. One fat and slimy-looking Levantine whispered in my ear that the Turks had lost terribly in the fighting. He was probably a Greek spy. A very hard-bitten, honest-looking Turkish captain in the same carriage with us was greatly pleased with the good news. When we told him the report that Tournavos was taken, he clasped his hands and said fervently, "Inshallah." ("God grant it.")

## CHAPTER IV

## OUR JOURNEY TO THE FRONT.

WE reached Salonica late on Monday night, April 19th. The Secretary of Riza Pasha, the Vali of Salonica, met us at the station, and also the cavass of the British Consul. We went almost immediately to the Governor's house. Riza Pasha, a charming old Turkish Vali, stout, good-tempered and kind, greeted us warmly. He had orders from Constantinople to facilitate our progress in every way, and placed himself at our disposition. Riza Pasha said that an officer and an escort would be ready for us at Kalaferia, the railway terminus, whenever we wished to start, and he also offered us the services of a Police Commissaire who could speak many languages, as dragoman. This man was a Jew, named Elia Allemand, who had long been in the Turkish local police. He was a fine powerful man, with plenty of courage and *savoir faire*, and proved very reliable and most useful to us. As for languages, he spoke several well, but very little English.

Elia was a master of Turkish, Greek, Italian, and Hebrew. His French was but slight, and his English very imperfect, but we got along very well by the help of his Italian.

I had a long talk with Riza Pasha, who took a broad and intelligent view of the political situation, and who gave us interesting details of the Turkish mobilisation. It was very remarkable how in so short a space as three weeks nearly 130,000 Turkish troops had been mobilised and sent forward to Thessaly and Epirus, without a hitch or difficulty of any kind. This was chiefly due to the invaluable railway along the Ægean Sea. This railway, joining Constantinople with Salonica, which had just been completed, made the Turks independent of the sea. But for it they could not possibly have mobilised an army on the Greek frontiers without long months of delay.

Riza also spoke warmly of the patriotism of the whole Turkish population of Salonica and Macedonia. Thousands of Ottoman volunteers, and many Jewish volunteers also, had come in, demanding to be led against the enemy; but there had been no disturbance or misconduct on their part. We had ourselves seen large numbers of these volunteers on our railway journey down from the Servian frontier.

The next morning we saw the British Consul-General of Salonica, Mr. J. E. Blunt, C.B., one of the oldest, most experienced, and most respected of her Majesty's officials in Turkey. Mr. Blunt was most kind to us, and did all in his power to promote the safety and comfort of our expedition. Finding there was a special military train leaving Salonica at 3 P.M. for Kalaferia, we decided to go on at once. At dusk we reached Kalaferia, the nearest railway station to the army in Thessaly, and found the Kaimakam and local authorities waiting to receive us. We were driven into the town and taken to a fine old Turkish house that had been prepared for our lodging. It was a great question whether we should start there and then and ride through the night, or sleep at Kalaferia. The Kaimakam, a stout, kindly old gentleman, was ready to adopt any arrangement we wished. It was pitch-dark, so we decided to stay at Kalaferia, and start very early on Wednesday morning. They gave us meat cooked in a sort of stew, sweetmeats and plenty of Turkish coffee. Our beds were arranged side by side—two palliasses laid on the floor—but the linen was remarkably fine and clean.

The Kaimakam and his fellow-notables were most loath to leave us. Evidently they felt it their duty even to see us safely to bed. But by great pressure we persuaded them that their departure would not be deemed by us as neglectful. At 3 A.M. we were awakened, and found a cavalry officer and escort of twelve troopers waiting; two horses for ourselves, and a very good carriage. With Elia we thus made a party of sixteen, all mounted, and the Araba.

The Kaimakam was already up and waiting to say good-bye, and we parted with regrets. An alarming incident occurred at starting. Ellis's horse, a very lively young Arab, bolted the moment we began to move, and disappeared full gallop up the road. It was very dark. We followed as fast as possible, and after some twenty minutes came up with them. The horse was too much for the boy, and had run away for some three miles till a steep hill enabled Ellis to pull him up. As the dawn slowly broke, the scene was magnificent. The road from Kalaferia to Ellassona, some eighty miles distant, passes, for the most part, through beautiful valleys, and over steep mountain ridges. The scenery is grand and diversified. Our road wound up a rich valley,



with noble views over the plain behind and fresh lines of hills and trees rising around.

We passed many soldiers wending their weary way to the front, and crowds of the patient pack animals, that did all the transport of the Turkish army, toiling with mute endurance along the stony, dusty, and precipitous paths.

Little horses, ponies, mules and denkeys of every kind trudged along laden with biscuits, forage, and ammunition, all for the army in front. Some of them, in addition to their regular loads, carried a tired soldier or muleteer; others had a dozen rifles tied together across their backs. All looked overburdened and exhausted. The transport of the Turkish army was indeed a marvel. How that great mass of over 100,000 men in Thessaly were conveyed over that terrible road, barely passable for wagons or guns, and then kept supplied with food and with shells for the cannon and cartridges for the guns, was a matter of amazement to every non-Turk present with Edhem Pasha.

Yet it was done, and, so far as we could see at the front, done satisfactorily. Each fresh advance added, of course, to the difficulty and delay until the army got fairly into Larissa. There large quantities of stores, abandoned by

the Greeks in their panic flight, were taken, and the whole rich Thessalian plain was swarming with cattle and poultry.

No doubt the difficulty of transport had something to do with Edhem's slowness in advance, especially the want of reserve ammunition. From Kalaferia, the railway terminus for the war, to Servidje (Greek Servia) is forty-five miles; from Servidje to Ellassona thirty-five miles, and from Ellassona to the Col di Melouna six miles. The Col was before the war the dividing ridge between Turkish territory and Greek. From Melouna the road drops sharply and steeply to the great Thessalian plain. From Melouna to Larissa is twenty-five miles, the town of Tournavos being more than half way on the main road, about fifteen miles from Melouna. Even when the army reached Larissa, all Edhem's ammunition had to be carried over 100 miles from the railway to his fighting line.

Our first experience of the zone of operations was a very lively one. The roads were crowded with bands of Arnauts, Albanian volunteers, all irregulars and very irregular. They had no regular uniform, but each man carried a rifle and cartouche belt, and wore not a fez, but a little white skull-cap drawn tight over his head. These

white caps are a comparatively recent Albanian fashion. Many had the front part of the head shaved above the temples, and some had long tufts of hair protruding behind. These Arnauts were formidable neighbours on the road; they had a dare-devil air about them that would be fitting in accomplished brigands. They guarded and cherished their rifles, and even patted and dandled them as mothers treat their infants. What was worse, they let off their rifles in every direction, sometimes aiming at distant objects for practice, often firing them off into the air for mere childish excitement; the bullets whizzing about made the road unpleasant. From round each corner as we approached the higher ground, the sound of rifle firing could be heard. We never turned a bend on the road without expecting to meet a missile from an Albanian gun. At one time our policeman got seriously alarmed. He rode after me and said these Arnauts were "Molto cattivo," that he could not understand a word they said, and that they were highly dangerous. Raouf Bey, too, was alarmed, and they begged us to get inside the carriage, so that the Arnauts might not see our Western dress. We reluctantly complied, but after ten minutes got out again and mounted our horses.

I think our escort exaggerated the danger, as there were no overt acts of menace against us so far as we could see. The troopers kept close up, however, with their carbines lying ready across their saddles; and two rode on to clear the road.

Whatever their want of discipline and love of looting may be, these Albanians are a magnificent race of men. We hardly saw a single Arnaut that looked small or delicate. They average nearly six feet in height, many being much taller; they are broad and strong, with big limbs and fine, clear, bright olive complexions. But although so tall and strong, the Albanians are as lithe and active as cats. Mountaineers born and bred, they skipped from rock to rock as if climbing was a pleasure to them.

The Arnauts are a totally different race of men to the Turks, wanting the patient discipline and steady stubborn courage of the Ottoman, but still brave and formidable, and like the Scottish Highlanders, resistless in a charge. We saw no regular officers with these Albanian volunteers, but each band was under its local chieftain called a "Bey," who receives from his followers a certain amount of deference and obedience. The Arnauts have never been thoroughly conquered. The Turks find them

most difficult to manage, and still more difficult to discipline. Any Christian power that might try to subdue these hardy, valiant, and high-spirited mountaineers would find the task a Herculean one. Later on we passed some time with the Prizrend battalion, a magnificent body of men and fairly under control. We got on very well with them, and were always warmly welcomed by the soldiers. They were always crying to be led into action, and offered to storm the impregnable hill of Kritiri by themselves, if allowed to attack it in their own way. The Prizrend battalion fought well at Valestinos, and I fear lost heavily, for their ardour was great and their courage was not to be denied.

The road as we advanced got worse and worse. It was difficult for the horses to keep their feet, and almost impossible for the araba to get along. At length we crossed the highest ridge and descended by a long and winding path to a rich and beautiful valley, where two old-fashioned villages lay glistening in the sun. The nearer one was a large and prosperous-looking village to the left of the road, and a guard of Turkish soldiers kept the approach to it, so as to ward off the visits of stray Arnauts. We had our luncheon at a roadside khan, where

there were no seats or tables and the dirt was extreme, and then pressed on to Servidje. Here occurred an alarming incident, which nearly put an end to the expedition. Ellis's Arab horse had been very fidgety along the route, rearing and behaving with general discomfort. We came to a piece of open country and tried a little gallop. The Arab again took the bit in his teeth and bolted across some stony ground. One of the troopers by galloping close to him made matters worse, and the boy was badly thrown. He fell on his head, and when picked up by the nearest trooper, had a severe gash on the top of his head and was bleeding profusely. There was no means of shelter and no water even within reach. Fortunately one of the soldiers knew something of bandaging wounds, and he put some of the soft fungus, which is used to light tobacco, in the cut, and tied up the head with handkerchiefs. I gave him brandy; and though very faint, Ellis managed to ride into Servidje, which was three hours further on.

I had his horse changed, and put a big trooper with his heavy kit on the mettlesome and unmanageable Arab. Even that weight did not subdue the horse's wild spirit, for he ran away with the trooper for some distance.

On every succeeding day, when he was ridden by a soldier, the Arab bolted; once when he was carrying my laden saddlebags, in addition to the weight of a big cavalryman and a heavy saddle. The trooper said that the little horse had Sheitan in him.

Servidje is a handsome town of some 3000 people, lying at the foot of the range that divides Ellassona from the valley of the Vistrice. Close to it, we passed on the road 5000 Turkish infantry marching to the war. These offered a great contrast to the Arnauts, whom we had now left behind. They were fine men, mostly *redifs* (reserve men) from Anatolia. They looked tired and hungry, and many of them were footsore. Their uniforms were dusty and very worn. But they were quiet, patient, and well-behaved, fine, large, deep-chested men, mostly between thirty and fifty years of age—true Ottomans. Several offered us water from their tin bottles as we passed; indeed, the courtesy and self-sacrifice of the Turkish soldier in this respect was very striking all through the campaign. Water is scarce in Thessaly, and the heat was terrific, yet the Ottoman soldier would always share his water-bottle with us if we asked for it, and even offer it to us without

asking. The simple Turkish soldier and peasant always behaves as a true gentleman.

We were most hospitably and cordially received by the Mutessarif of Servidje, Hifzi Pasha. He was much concerned at Ellis's accident, and sent at once for the chief military surgeon, who pronounced the cut severe, but not dangerous. He dressed it with great care, using an antiseptic, and rolled a large white bandage round the boy's head. This bandage he had to wear all through our stay at the front. With the red fez placed on its top, Ellis became a very conspicuous object, and caused much interest among the soldiers. They got the impression that he had been wounded in the sacred cause of Islam and were very friendly. Every non-Turk, including the correspondents, English, German, and French, with Edhem Pasha's army had to wear the fez, as a matter of precaution. The Albanian irregulars have a trick of shooting at strange headgear, which is not pleasant for their wearers. So Edhem Pasha made the wearing of the fez *de rigueur*. The fez has two serious drawbacks. It leaves the whole face and the back of the neck exposed to the sun and glare. As the heat in Thessaly was terrific, we suffered correspondingly, and lost the skin of our faces.



at least four times. Some Turks wear a sort of capote over the fez, which shields the face and neck. Mr. William Peel, the correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, wore an excellent kind of Circassian headdress, half turban, half capote, which, with other original garments and Eastern characteristics, besides being comfortable, gave him a most Oriental appearance. But very few Europeans with the Turks were so ingenious or so fortunate in their garb.

Hifzi Pasha, an Albanian by birth, is a fine specimen of the Turkish official—tall, strong and active. He was well informed upon the general relations of Turkey with foreign countries and as to the dangers which Turkey ran during the present war. His position—in charge of a considerable portion of the main line of communications—was an important one, and he seemed anxious as to the attitude of Bulgaria and Servia. Hifzi Pasha was as desirous as most of the prominent Turks whom I met for the friendship and good opinion of England. He felt, however, that his country had been treated with much injustice, especially in the judgment passed in England upon the disturbances in Constantinople. The Turks one and all regard the disorder and loss of life in the capital on

August 26th and 27th, 1896, as entirely provoked by the Armenians, who during a period of four days kept up a rain of bombs in the heart of a peaceful city.

I could not but admit the justice of this contention, and reflected as to what would have been the conduct of a London or Glasgow or Liverpool mob, had the Fenians in 1883 committed in those cities similar outrages with a similar effect—over 300 Turks were killed and wounded in Constantinople. The number of Armenians killed in Constantinople also was greatly exaggerated. Careful enquiries showed that the number was not over 2000. Much of the violence shown by the Mussulman populace was due to the long-standing jealousy between the Armenian hamals (porters and dock labourers) and the Mussulman hamals. Hifzi Pasha attributed a good deal of the strained feeling between England and Turkey to the conduct of the British Ambassador at Constantinople. He entertained us with much hospitality, and rose at 5 A.M. to say good-bye in person. The journey to Ellassona was long and wearisome, and I dared not ride hard on account of Ellis's injury.

We reached Ellassona, however, by 2 o'clock.

The town is disappointing in size and very straggling, though it lies in the bosom of a fine plain, which is bounded by the grand hills of the border line between Turkey and Greece. These loomed large and varied in our front as we rode down to the headquarters of the Turkish army. A very striking conduit for the waters of the river is built along the roadside and high up above the stream on the northern side of Ellassona. This artificial water-course is of great antiquity, and furnishes the town with an abundant supply of good water. The sound of distant cannon aroused our fatigued and flagging spirits as we entered Ellassona. We rode direct to the Konak to see the Marshal and to present our letters of recommendation. But the Konak was deserted by all except the Mushir's valet, who gave us coffee, and told us that Edhem Pasha was on the summit of the Col di Melouna, at least six miles away.

We were both very hungry and tired, but the sound of the cannon was too much for us. Every kind of vague rumour had reached our ears on the route down. Some said that Tournavos and even Larissa had been taken; others that the Turks were in possession of all Thessaly.

As we got near Elassona it became clear, however, that Edhem Pasha had not yet cleared the frontier ridges of the enemy, and that the Greeks were still within a measurable distance of Elassona. We therefore decided to ride on at once with Raouf Bey and six of our troopers to the sound of the cannon, and take our chance of food and rest later on.

## CHAPTER V.

## EDHEM PASHA AND MELOUNA.

It was a very tiring ride across the flat road that leads from Elassona to the Melouna Col. Horse and rider were alike hot, weary and hungry. The dust and heat were excessive, and the road was thronged with soldiers, baggage horses and carts, going and returning. The booming of the cannon had ceased, and there was a general impression as we got nearer the hills that the day's fighting was over.

When close to the foot of the pass, we met Mr. Clive Bigham, the *Times* correspondent, coming from the Col. Mr. Bigham at once made himself known, and thanked me for intervening on his behalf when he was detained at Salonica just before the war. He gave us a general summary of the military position, and said that the Mushir was close behind him. Mr. Bigham was always a very agreeable companion, and he made a careful and excellent war correspondent. He had been in the Guards and spoke Turkish fairly well—two very consider-

able advantages. His book on the war is well worth reading. We rode forward, and in a few minutes met Edhem Pasha, followed by a numerous staff. The Mushir was informed by Mr. Bigham who we were, and he at once greeted us cordially and presented me to the officers around him. The operations of the day had been successful, the Marshal stated; the various flanking columns were steadily advancing, and he hoped soon to move forward with his whole force into the Thessalian plain. There had been much difficulty with the transport, and especially with the ammunition, which, after my experience of the road, I could well believe. We turned our horses' heads and rode back with Edhem Pasha to Ellassona. I had considerable conversation with members of his staff, and soon found out that there was great dissatisfaction with the slowness of the advance. The delay of the forward march after the victory of the preceding Saturday and Sunday at Melouna and all along the line, seemed to the younger officers quite inexplicable.

Suggestions have been made in the newspapers that the cause of this delay was instructions from Constantinople, due to what is known as "Palace influence." This seems to me highly

improbable. In the first place, one of the Sultan's *aides-de-camp* with the army was the keenest critic of the delay, and said to me bitterly, "I cannot understand why this splendid army, with the bravest soldiers in the world, has been kept here inactive for five days when it ought to be already in Larissa." Secondly, the delay that took place was undoubtedly disapproved of by the Sultan, for His Majesty sent out Ghazi Osman Pasha to Salonica to replace Edhem. It was only the advance of the Mushir on April 24th, and his very timely capture of Larissa, that saved Edhem from disgrace. If there was any excuse for the delay beyond the undoubted difficulties connected with the transport, it must be found in Edhem Pasha's extreme caution. He is of the old school, a very careful and exact strategist, and wishes to be certain that every button is in order before he moves. In these days of rapid concentration, and of sudden and tremendous blows, such tactics are doubtful. Against an active and daring general with good troops it might even prove disastrous. Edhem's strategy appeared to be better than his tactics.

Possibly, however, the delays and the want of combined action that were evident in several

of the battles were due rather to the faults of his lieutenants, the generals of division, than to his own. The general opinion among the non-Turk onlookers was that the subordinate generals of Edhem's army were inferior and not equal to their duties. Mr. G. A. Steevens, the able correspondent of the *Daily Mail* with the Turkish army, said in a letter to that paper of June 11th :—

*The Turks have the best soldiers and the worst officers in the world. The Turkish soldier is Titanically enduring, heroically fearless, and angelically disciplined. He obeys his officer like a good child; he will walk starving through a street of bread shops if his officer but says "Don't touch." Albanians are different—neater and smaller in body, impetuous and uncontrollable in spirit. But with the Turks, even as they stand, good officers could do anything in the world, and good officers are what they lack. The officers—of course, with exceptions—are ignorant and idle, corrupt, and often cowardly. Many cannot read; hardly any can lead men straight. The very ignorant elder men are the bravest. The younger are better educated—and I have seen a dozen of them shirk fire. The generals are hopeless, especially the generals of divisions; insubordinate, sluggish, absolutely incapable of combination, ignorant of the every range of their guns. When they ought to have cut off the Greeks and the Greeks got off, they were as pleased as little children. Quite honestly they could see no difference between destroying the enemy and merely forcing him to retreat.*



I do not go by any means so far as this, which is too hard upon the Turkish officers. But there certainly was considerable room for improvement in the tactics after Deliler on April 23rd; after the capture of Larissa on April 25th; before Valestinos on April 30th, and in the battle of Domokos on May 17th. The delays and blunders on these occasions seem to have been due to the faults of divisional and brigade commanders. The mistakes of premature action at Valestinos and Domokos, when what were meant to be reconnaissances in force were developed into real and sanguinary attacks, are explained or excused on the ground that the modern long range and repeating rifle prevents the soldiers from being kept in hand. This, however, would hardly be the case if the brigade and regimental officers were good.

The general conviction of unreasonable delay that prevailed among the Turkish staff and also among the English correspondents—four of whom I met that first day—led me to pay a visit to the Mushir after dinner the same night. I had a long and very friendly conversation with Edhem Pasha in the presence of several of his staff, who were overjoyed at my representations to their chief. I spoke entirely from a political

standpoint, not presuming to criticise the Marshal's strategy. The dangers of delay to Turkey were, I pointed out, immense. Bulgaria and Servia were, it was true, still quiet; but very little encouragement would induce them to mobilise and bring two fresh foes into the field against Turkey. A far more powerful enemy than the Balkan States was also watching its chance, and no one could be sure that a blow might not at any moment be aimed at the very centre and heart of the Ottoman Empire, Constantinople itself. The interests of humanity, moreover, would be best served by a speedy conclusion of the war which had been forced upon Turkey. The loss of life to both combatants, and the sufferings of the soldiers and people affected, would be diminished by an early and complete triumph.

These were my arguments, and the Marshal entirely admitted their force. He said that it was his desire to bring the campaign as soon as possible to a triumphant conclusion. He was about to make an expedition late that night with his staff to a distant and critical point in order to satisfy himself that all was ready for the decisive advance, and he hoped in a few days to be in occupation of Larissa. These declarations gave

the liveliest satisfaction to the Marshal's staff as well as to myself, and they all warmly congratulated me afterwards in private on what I had said.

Edhem Pasha is an able general of the old school, of about fifty-five years of age. He is a good strategist, cautious, humane and kindly, with a bright and fascinating eye and an impassive face, except when lighted up by a smile. There is then in the brightness of his eye and the expression of his mouth a peculiar charm. Edhem has proved his humanity and his high qualities as a disciplinarian not only in Thessaly but also in Zeitoun. The behaviour of his troops in Thessaly was truly admirable, and he showed great forbearance in Zeitoun, where he spared the Zeitounlis who had massacred 500 Turkish recruits in cold blood. If Edhem Pasha has any fault, it is that which seems ingrained in the Turkish character, the inability to follow up a victory. The average Turkish general seems unable to complete his success by that series of rapid and continuous blows which prevent all chance of the enemy's rallying and regaining courage and organisation. This was the fault of the great Osman Pasha at Plevna, who might, after the tremendous repulse of the

Russians on September 13, 1877, have driven their shattered legions into the Danube. This was the fault committed on the Lom in 1877, when Mehemet Ali, who had on several occasions severely defeated the Russians, was recalled just as he was about to inflict the final blow upon the army of the Csesarewitch (afterwards Alexander III.). A stupid and heavy old Pasha, Achmet Eyoub, replaced Mehemet Ali, and never made a forward move afterwards. Fuad Pasha, the brilliant General who captured a whole Russian brigade at Elena in December, 1877, is perhaps the only Turkish officer who has shown himself active and overwhelming in the offensive. Had the Greek army been followed up vigorously and without cessation after the panic flight from Larissa on April 25, it would have ceased to exist as an organised body, and some 4000 or more gallant Ottoman soldiers would not have been placed *hors de combat* after that date.

The Turkish Quartier-General contains some first-class officers who would do credit to any European army. Most of these have been educated to arms in Germany, and speak German; hence the prevailing idea—which, however, is quite mistaken—that there were many German officers with the Turkish army.

As a matter of fact, there was only one, Grumbkoff Pasha, a very fine soldier. Von Grumbkoff was only at headquarters for seven days, and left before me. Men like Seifulah Pasha, Mustapha Natik Bey, Sabit Bey, Hassan Bey, Nedjib Bey, Enver Bey, and Riza Pasha, who commands the artillery, are all highly trained and excellent officers. Seifulah Pasha, in especial, was equally active and admirable in directing military movements in the field and in maintaining order and discipline on the march.

I can bear the strongest possible testimony to the discipline and good conduct of the Turkish soldiers. A long telegram was despatched to Sir Phillip Currie, the British Ambassador at Constantinople, signed by myself and by every English correspondent with Edhem's army, testifying to the admirable behaviour of the Ottoman army and to the falsity of the charges of massacre and pillage so recklessly brought against that army by the Greeks. The night after the capture of Larissa, three of the leading Ottoman officers, Seifulah Pasha, Mustapha Natik Bey, and Nedjib Bey, went about all night with special patrols to prevent any looting. Edhem Pasha put guards over all the Christian

churches so soon as he entered a town, in order to avert the slightest injury or even disrespect.

I warned my Press friends to be ready early the next morning, but they, one and all, ridiculed the idea of an early start; so convinced were they by past experience of the extreme deliberation of the Turkish military movements. I gave orders to be called at five, and went to bed well satisfied with the day's work.

Although we were ready by six the next morning, we found that it was nearly nine before the Turkish headquarters moved towards Melouna, so that there was some justice in the correspondents' view. Edhem had been out very late, so there also was good reason for his latish start. As we rode slowly over the broad flat road to the Col, the sound of an occasional cannon shot came down the wind; but the firing was only spasmodic, not regular. The road does not begin to rise till close to the hills themselves. Then it rises sharply and steeply for some 900 feet to the summit of the well-known pass, now famous as the Col di Melouna. The road up the pass was in a very bad state, in places almost impassable for horses. We passed a battery of artillery

literally forcing its way upwards with the help of some fifty soldiers to each gun, in addition to the horses. They tugged and pushed along in spurts of about thirty yards at a time, shouting in unison like sailors at an anchor.

As we got to the summit, we met the first signs of the horrors of war in the shape of three badly wounded soldiers, who were being carried into the hospital tents by the side of the pass. One of these, poor man, was a most ghastly spectacle. His lower jaw had been shattered by a piece of shell, and his face was terribly distorted and expressive of great pain. Another man had been shot through the lungs. He seemed cheerful, but was pale as death. The third had a bullet through both his thighs, and suffered acutely when they lifted him off the pony that had carried him up from the battle below. The beds in the hospital tents were well made, and there were plenty of doctors and attendants. Here, as elsewhere during the war, the way in which severely wounded men rode and even walked long distances without apparent injury was quite marvellous.

The Marshal took up his position in front of a large tent pitched on a commanding summit

above the right of the road. There was another large tent to the right front which was placed at the disposal of the correspondents and other non-combatants present, and Edhem Pasha very kindly had a smaller tent reserved for myself.

A splendid panorama opened out before us. There lay the rich plain of Thessaly, extending as far as the eye could reach. In the distance we could dimly see the outline of Turnavos, while, like a broad white road, the dry bed of the river Xerias, the ancient Europus, ran across the plain from west to east. A beautiful green patch of trees and meadow land stretched out on our front from a spur of the hills towards the village of Deliler, and a spring of bright water, could be seen rushing forth from the hillside and carrying with it eastwards a delicious verdure into the thirsty plain. Close to this spring Turkish batteries were silently drawn up in the open, soon to be aroused into deadly life. To our right front a long spur of the hills ran almost due southward into the plain, and obscured our view of the movement of the Turkish right wing.

On the far left also the hills projected into the plain, and beyond the furthest of these descending slopes Hamdi Pasha was said to be

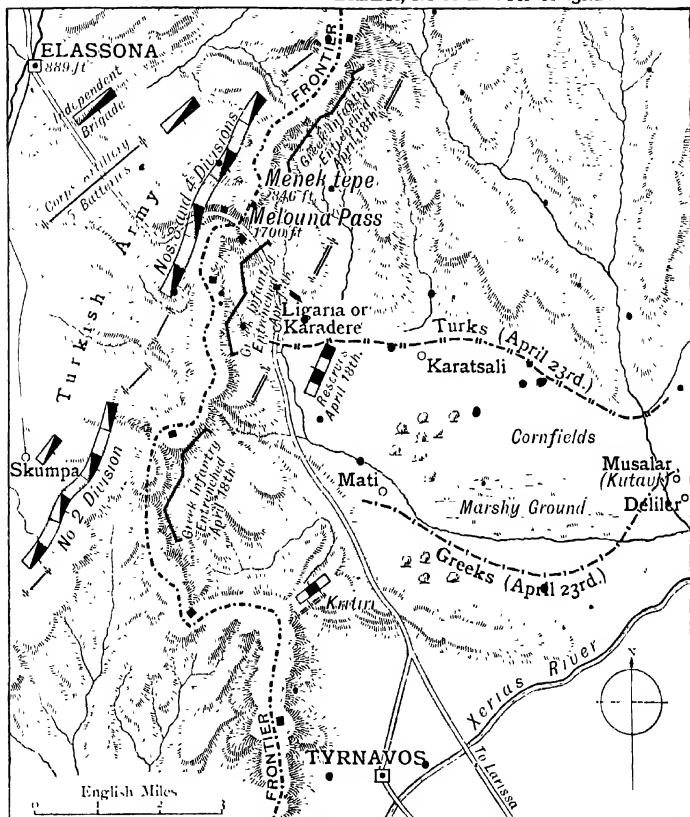


approaching with his division in order to turn the Greek right. The Greek artillery were about two miles further south of Karadere, clustered around a little oblong hillock that rose by itself in the plain, but it was hard to distinguish the guns until they came into action.

Friday turned out to be a very important day in the advance of the Turkish army. There were two smart engagements—one, an artillery duel at long bowls, known to the Greeks as the battle of Mati; the other, a regular battle on a small scale, winding up with a bayonet charge and the capture from the Greeks of a village named Deliler, situated on their extreme right. Hamdi Pasha, on the far left of the Turkish lines, had been steadily pushing forward from Karya. Hamdi had thoroughly repulsed the Greeks who raided into Turkish territory near Mount Olympus, and had now advanced into the Thessalian plain, his left resting on the River Peneius and his right in touch with Haidar Pasha. That officer did most of the fighting on Friday, and his command stretched from the foot of the Melouna Pass up to the village of Deliler.

This was the decisive battle of the first stage of the war, and led directly to the capture of Larissa and the occupation of the greater part of

# SKETCH MAP OF THE BATTLES OF MELOUNA & MATI-DEILIR, APRIL 18TH & 23RD.



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## References.

• Infantry	• Cavalry	• Artillery
Turks .....		
Greeks .....		
		Blockhouses

The Battle of Melouna (18th. April) is shewn on the Ridge running North and South.  
The Battle of Mati-Deliler (23rd. April) on the ground to the East  
Respective Positions being, Turks ..... Greeks.....

[To face p. 102.



Thessaly. Few, if any, who saw the engagements at Mati and Deliler on April 23rd, realised their importance. Certainly the completeness of the Greek defeat was not appreciated at the Turkish headquarters, or Edhem Pasha would not have ridden back that evening to sleep in Ellassona, and the panic-stricken Greek army would never have been allowed to escape across the Peneius without hot and crushing pursuit.

The centre was commanded by Memdouk Pasha, and extended from Melouna south-westwards along the hill-tops that formed the boundary line between Greek and Turkish territory. There was here some desperate fighting on April 17th and 18th. The Turks only captured these tremendous heights after a prolonged conflict of over twenty-four hours. The blockhouses are close together along the highest ridge of the hills, and the fighting was in places very severe. One Greek blockhouse was taken and retaken four times. Three Greek blockhouses on the summit of the hills just west of Melouna were taken by the Turks at the point of the bayonet. Here the gallant Hafiz Pasha was killed while leading on his men. The Turkish losses in killed alone were 150, while the Greeks must have lost

much more heavily. The dead were mostly buried, but some of the bodies were only loosely covered with stones, as the ground is extremely hard. The remains were in places visible to us—a horrid commentary upon war.

The first shell was fired in the artillery fight at 9.45, and the cannonade continued without cessation till about 12.45. There were six Turkish batteries in action, with a front of about two and a half miles. The Greeks had four or five batteries well placed on slightly rising ground, over a front of one and a half miles. The Turkish firing seemed good; we saw several of their shells pitch right into the Greek batteries. The value of the Greek firing may be judged from the fact that after three hours' incessant cannonade the Turks had only three wounded. The Greek loss is unknown, but it must have been considerable. It was here that a Greek officer was mortally wounded, and his comrade gave him a last kiss as he was dying, an incident that the papers have frequently portrayed. There was no attempt made to attack with infantry on either side in this part of the field.

There had been a small artillery duel proceeding all the morning on the left of Haidar's division between the Turkish guns and two

Greek batteries on the right of their line. A few volleys of musketry relieved the monotony of the guns, but nothing serious occurred till after midday. About 1.30 very heavy fusillades were heard from the direction of Deliler, where Haidar Pasha was executing a flanking movement and trying to turn the Greek right. There was some hard fighting between the two forces for about two hours. Volley succeeded volley, and the sound drifted up the wind to the Col di Melouna, where we had a splendid vantage point. The firing ceased about three o'clock, and it appeared that the Turks had captured Deliler. Subsequent events showed, however, that the Greeks had been driven only out of the main portion of the village, but still held their own in some houses to the south and west of the village. All the correspondents with the Turkish headquarters left for Ellassona before five o'clock, saying that the day's fighting was over and that they would send off their despatches. As the Mushir did not go, we decided to stay, not having had a surfeit of fighting like the correspondents. We were rewarded by seeing the final Turkish charge, which settled the first stage of the campaign and led to the deplorable and ludicrous panic of the Greek army of Thessaly.

About six o'clock a fierce splutter of fire broke out, which lasted for about thirty minutes. The Greeks were then seen rapidly retiring across the plain, a few cavalry covering their retreat. I told the correspondents the same evening that the Greek position seemed untenable after this success, but no one contemplated the panic of that night.

Deliler was close to the river Peneius, and north-east of Tournavos. It was evident that a superior force such as Edhem commanded could easily turn the Greek position at Tournavos and Larissa also, so as to cut off the Greek retreat. Moreover, the advance of Hairi Pasha's division from Damasi on the Greek left threatened a turning movement on the south-west as well. The Greek generals were quite justified in their retreat after the capture of Deliler. Equally justifiable was the abandonment of Larissa, for it could not have been successfully defended. An attempt at defence must have led to the capture of the garrison and probably to the destruction of the town itself by cannonade. But there seems no excuse for the disgraceful panic of the night of the 23rd along the Tournavos road, or for the hardly less frenzied scuttle from Larissa on Saturday, the 24th. Equally

surprising was the apparent ignorance of the Greek flight at the Turkish headquarters, and the absence of all attempt at vigorous pursuit. Indeed, but for Von Grumbkoff's decision and unauthorised activity, five more days might have been passed near the Col di Melouna before the army moved forward upon the capital of Thessaly.

During the day heavy firing was heard from the direction of the high summit on our right, known as Kritiri. This was a lofty and precipitous hill about five miles south-west of Melouna, and was still held by the Greeks. Several attempts to dislodge the garrison had failed, and the hill seemed almost impregnable. Heavy fusillades were kept up on the 23rd between the Turkish infantry clustered among the rocks on the eastern face of Kritiri and the Greeks on the summit. The Prizrend battalion of Arnauts sent a special request to Edhem Pasha to be allowed to take the hill by themselves, and to attack it in their own way. These gallant mountaineers would probably have succeeded, for they are adepts at hill fighting; but the capture of Deliler saved them from the risk. That evening the Greeks abandoned the Kritiri height, in consequence of the retreat of



their main body in the plain. Neschat Pasha, who commanded the central division, also had a sharp fight at Tschaihissar, on the right front of Melouna. We heard the booming of his cannon, but the distance was too great for the sound of rifle firing.

Since Mr. W. H. Russell watched the various fortunes of the battle of Sadowa from the church tower of Koniggratz, probably no spectators of a fight have enjoyed such advantages for seeing every move and phase of the conflict as did those who sat with the Mushir Edhem Pasha at the summit of the Col di Melouna.

The whole scene of the battle was spread out like a panorama before our eyes, and, though the Turkish guns were some two miles from our heights, we could follow the whole cannonade, and in this pellucid air the batteries did not seem more than a mile away. The smoke from the muzzle of the guns as they were fired, the reports which came thundering up the little valley, the puffs of smoke and yellow dust made by the exploding shells, both Greek and Turk, could all be distinctly seen and heard from the Col di Melouna.

Several wounded men were brought up on

the backs of the wonderful Oriental donkeys, with their curious saddles and their immense variety of loads. The spectacle of these dead and wounded men brought home to the senses most vividly the horrible side of war. We passed miles upon miles of patient soldiers with their heavy loads, weary and footsore, but never complaining and never going back. The Turkish soldier is the most enduring and courageous in the world. He lives on nothing. He marches any distance. He will go anywhere, and take any position. He is patient, temperate, honest, brave to a fault. Over 100,000 Turkish soldiers marched along the road from Kalaféria to Ellassona, a distance of some eighty miles. Their conduct was absolutely exemplary, probably as good as, or better than that of any Western European army in similar circumstances. The Greek families lived with perfect safety in Ellassona; the Greek children played about without fear among the Turkish soldiers. Every correspondent at the front—and there were not less than five able and active English representatives of English journals—bore the most enthusiastic testimony to the intrepid courage and admirable endurance of the Turkish soldiers. Every European who has seen them

in war says the same of the Turks. No one has given more remarkable and convincing evidence of their high military qualities and good conduct than Mr. Archibald Forbes, who was with the Russians in Bulgaria and Roumelia during the Russo-Turkish war of 1877. It is a desperate pity that all the reckless maligners of the Turkish army could not see the Turkish troops as we saw them in Macedonia and Thessaly.\*

I wished to spend the night in my tent on the Col, expecting to see next morning an early advance and a decisive action all along the line. But the Mushir advised me to return with him to Ellassona, and there was a minimum of food obtainable at Melouna. So we all rode back in the gloaming to headquarters at Ellassona, Edhem Pasha satisfied with the successes of the day and promising a forward movement for the morrow. But not a soul had the least idea that the Greek army would have wholly disappeared, still less was there any conception in the Turkish camp of the scenes of panic and disorder that were even then taking place throughout the Greek army.

\* Testimony from Mr. Archibald Forbes to the Turkish Army will be found in Appendix IV.

## CHAPTER VI.

## FROM MELOUNA TO LARISSA.

THE results of Friday's engagement proved much more important than were expected by the headquarters staff. The Greeks had failed to keep the high ridges and steep passes that constitute the frontier. Equally had they failed to strike the Turkish columns as the various divisions debouched from the barrier of the mountain passes into the level plains of Thessaly. Not only was the fate of Larissa settled by the fighting of Friday, 23rd, but the war ought to have been practically over. Everywhere the Greeks were in full retreat. On Sunday Larissa fell into Edhem Pasha's hands without a struggle. The enemy, divided into three groups and terribly demoralised, retreated to Volo, Pharsalos, and Trikkala. Had they been immediately pursued, the whole of the Greek army of Thessaly would probably have fled as rapidly as possible to these historic defiles of Thermopylæ, where, if any

courage and organisation remained in them, the country offers every advantage for a defence. It was the 'turning movement of Hamdi Pasha from Nezeros on the left, and that of Hairi Pasha from Damasi on the right, that decided the sudden retreat of the Greeks. Haidar Pasha's brilliant capture of Deliler on Friday no doubt gave the Greek troops a taste of the quality of the Turkish infantry, which they hardly desired to have repeated.

We left Ellassona at eight o'clock on Saturday over the same dreary and dusty road to the Col di Melouna, where we arrived at the summit just after the Marshal. The whole general staff were in busy consultation over a table by the roadside spread with maps. We soon learned that the Greeks were in full retreat everywhere, and that a general advance of the Turkish forces was imminent. The Marshal's movements were not excessively rapid, and it was 11.30 before he mounted and rode down the steep, stony and winding hill-path that leads to Thessaly.

There was an air of general jubilation upon every face, and the cry was, "To Larissa." After about two hours' ride we came to the lovely watercourse in the plain which we had

admired from the hill-top the day before, the pure, cold and delicious stream gushing from the rocks and pouring its invigorating waters across the meadows. A little oasis of verdant vegetation marked the winding course of this stream. It was close by here that the Turkish cannon were placed on Friday. Men and horses now revelled in its refreshing waters, for the heat had been terrific, and the baked soil threw back the blazing rays of the sun with unbroken force.

The Marshal had intended to return to the Col, but we begged him to press on to Tournavos at once. The Turkish cavalry were in occupation, and every day lost in the campaign was a day lost to Turkey. This view was strongly backed up by the best members of the Marshal's staff, notably by Sabit Bey and by Nedjib Bey, one of the Sultan's *aides-de-camp*. At length, after a long consultation under an umbrageous lime tree close to the spring of Karadere, the Marshal, to the general delight, mounted and turned his horse's head in the direction of Tournavos. It was a ride of ten miles along a good road, but very dusty and fearfully hot. The sun had got into my head, and I had great

difficulty in keeping my seat. However, no difficulties arose, the enemy were nowhere to be found, and we could see that the hill-tops parallel with our right were covered with marching columns of the Turkish infantry. Curiously enough, the traces of the Greek flight were not very numerous—nothing like what might have been expected, from the description, we afterwards read by English correspondents with the Greek army.

We broke into a rapid trot as the houses and minarets of Tournavos came closer. The Mushir presented me with a splendid rose just as we entered the outskirts of the town at 3 P.M. We passed through and through the town, which is a picturesque little place on the banks of the Xerias, now quite dry. The Marshal carefully inspected the country on every side for traces of the foe, but none were visible. At length the heat became too much for me, and as we passed a nice-looking house with the door of a cool basement open, I skipped off and threw myself upon an old palliasse that lay on the floor; there I remained without moving till eight the next morning. The Marshal sent his *aide-de-camp* to say he was returning to camp for the night at the exquisite spring of Karadere, and

offered us a tent there. Tournavos was not considered quite secure, as the enemy's whereabouts were not known. But I did not feel equal to the ride back, and knew that it would hardly be possible for me to go over the same ground the next day, as well as the extra ten miles that lay between Tournavos and Larissa.

Baron von Sonnenberg, a retired officer of the German general staff, and who was currently reported to represent the Emperor at the war, most kindly offered to stay and take charge of our guard. With the perfect organization of the Germans, he divided the six troopers available into four-hour reliefs, and gave directions to the two lieutenants, Raouf Bey and his own officer, Server Bey, to visit the patrols every two hours. The Baron himself made the rounds three times during the night. But not the slightest trouble occurred. The only blood spilt at Tournavos was that of chickens and kine. The town had been deserted by all its Greek population except six families, who were in no way injured. There was an abundance of fowls and pigeons and some cattle, all of which were a God-send to the hungry and tired soldiers, and also to us. Elia made a delicious chicken broth, with rice, which



I managed to eat, and a refreshing sleep restored me to activity.

We started at ten the next morning for Larissa, which we heard Grumbkoff Pasha had just occupied with the cavalry. There were Baron von Sonnenberg, Raouf Bey, Elia and the six troopers, Ellis and myself. The Marshal was still behind at Karadere.

On our journey we had an illustration of the kindness of the Turks for animals. There was a little bleating kid that had lost its mother. One of our soldiers took a fancy to it, and he carried the kid away with him in a sack. At the bridge end across the Peneius we were stopped for a moment by the sentries, and there made the acquaintance of a fine old Turkish colonel, one of the most splendid men I have ever seen—tall, strong, and patriarchal, with a hearty courtesy which marks the Turks of the old school. This old colonel heard the kid crying for food. He immediately ordered a female goat to be brought, and the little creature at once enjoyed its accustomed nourishment. This grand old officer had been badly wounded at Plevna, and had received a slight wound at Deliler the preceding day. While we were drinking coffee with him a poor Greek woman came up, and in

querulous tones complained that she could not get to her children, who were in a village two miles south, the guard at the bridge having orders to stop everyone. The colonel immediately ordered a corporal to take the woman to her children, and he himself gave her some bread. It was very hard on the tired corporal, who was taking his mid-day meal in the shade; but off he went, and with him the Greek woman trudged contentedly along. We passed the couple, two miles further along on the road.

Within a few minutes an orderly galloped up with written orders for the colonel. The whole line was to advance and push on to Larissa. Merrily the bugle rang out, and the regiment formed up in five minutes. Here occurred an incident. About four miles from Larissa the Baron began to ride hard. I asked him why, and said we might as well ride on together. He replied that he must be in Larissa as soon as possible. I pointed out that there was no special object apparent, and again asked him why he must be in Larissa so quickly. He then let out the secret. "I must be first in Larissa because I am a German." This was more than flesh and blood could stand, so I said, "Then we will race," and put my horse to a

gallop. Mine turned out to be the better horse, and I soon forged ahead, reaching the bridge that spans the Peneius some three minutes ahead. I did not cross it, however, but waited for the Baron, who had been the soul of kindness to me the night before. Indeed, I should not have raced the Baron at all, had he not put it on the ground of his being a German. We then rode in side by side over the bridge, from which Grumlykoff Pasha had just removed the dynamite. We were the first non-Turks, excepting Von Grumbkoff, in Larissa, and were there even before the Turkish infantry. My escort and Ellis were about ten minutes behind us. The other Europeans, correspondents, etc., arrived in detachments about an hour later, the first in being Mr. Bigham, of the *Times*, and Mr. Weldon, of the *Morning Post*.

There was a splendid regiment of Arnauts near by, the well-known Prizrend battalion, who were just coming up on the green meadows by the side of the bridge with loud cheers.

The most admirable order was preserved by the Turks everywhere. In Larissa sentinels were placed at the entrance to every side street, and no one was allowed to pass except in the main thoroughfares. The guard at various

points had orders to stop all soldiers who appeared to have any loot with them. It seemed very hard upon the gallant and hungry soldiers to be forced to give up the casual chickens, bags of nuts and bits of meat which they had picked up. These soon made a little heap on the ground, which their owners abandoned with sad glances. When the immense provocation given by the Greeks before the war is considered, the order preserved here is something wonderful. No European army could have behaved better, few would have behaved so well. The example, however, had a good effect, and very few Greek houses were touched. Most of the Greek inhabitants had fled, but some remained. They were much better off under the guardianship of the Turks than during the last two days of the Greek rule. For the Greek authorities, when abandoning the town, had released all the prisoners and given them rifles. These gaol-birds, joining with the raff of Greek irregulars, held the peaceful inhabitants at their mercy and did a vast deal of pillaging. They even maltreated some of their own countrywomen. This was told us by the leading Christian inhabitants who had remained, including a priest and an Italian. The Turkish

headquarters staff made every possible effort to prevent looting, and a number of soldiers were severely flogged for carrying off chickens and lambs. There were only two cases of fire in Larissa, and these may well have been due to accident. Along the whole route we only saw three dead bodies; two of these were those of Greek soldiers, and the third looked like a civilian. We saw six Greek prisoners brought in, three soldiers, one a captain, and the others irregulars. All were small, wretched-looking men, with no physique and a miserable, low cast of face. It is not surprising that the Greek army, if these prisoners were representatives of its force, should have no chance against the splendid, well-built, broad-chested, indomitable Ottomans. But what a terrible responsibility rests upon the Greek Government and the Ethnike Hetairia for having deliberately forced on a war, without provocation, and with an enemy in every way so superior. The Turks took ten large pieces of cannon at Larissa, 5000 Gras rifles, an immense amount of ammunition of all kinds, and also large quantities of provisions.

After crossing the long bridge over the Peneius, we stood for some time at the head of the main street, close under the mosque that so

picturesquely overlooks the river and the bridge, watching the Turkish infantry march into the town. Battalion after battalion filed by, dusty and hot, but with a martial and proud bearing. Their bands, or rather the poor apology for bands which the Turkish regiments possess, were playing wild and triumphant airs. This was indeed a prize—the capital of Thessaly was won, and the Turkish flag once more flew over Larissa. A large group of Moslem inhabitants had gathered close to where we stood, overjoyed at the arrival of the Ottoman troops. The last few days had been a time of serious trial and danger to them, especially since the Greek Prefect had released and armed the prisoners, and the Greek regular troops had left the town at their mercy. These Thessalian Mussulmans were anxious to be of service to us, and offered to hold our horses and to fetch us bread and wine. Here, too, Mr. Weldon, who was very adroit with his camera, took a photograph of our group with the Sultan's *aide-de-camp*, as we sat on horseback looking at the jubilant entry of the Turkish infantry.

Mustapha Natic Bey was the first Turkish *commandant-de-place* over Larissa. He at once proceeded to assign us our quarters, and placed

us with the Baron von Sonnenberg and Mr. Bigham and Mr. Weldon at the bank. This was the best house available in Larissa, and had, we understood, been used by the Crown Prince Constantine for his residence. The living quarters adjoined the business part of the bank, and this made our excellent Baron very cautious, if not nervous. He insisted upon all the doors of the bank itself being carefully sealed, and the keys he guarded most religiously. The best sleeping-room in the bank, which was well, even luxuriously, furnished, and contained two good beds, was assigned to us. There were clothes of all sorts lying about the room; the previous occupants had evidently made a sudden departure in the small hours of the morning. A great variety of Parisian perfumes, eau-de-cologne and toilet-vinegar were scattered about the room, which seemed surprising for a small Greek banker. In the Baron's bed-chamber, which adjoined ours, there were three books, and three only. These were all French, viz.:—Eugene Sue's "Mysteries of Paris," Zola's "Nana," and "The Secret History of Napoleon III."—as Von Sonnenberg well said, a little catalogue "very suggestive of modern Greek civilisation."

We suffered much from thirst, and it was

long before we could get any wine, the water from the well near by smelling and tasting most suspicious. The Turkish authorities had immediately sealed up the cellars of the Hotel Olympe, the principal hotel of Larissa, and would not allow anyone to get at the wine with which we were told the cellars abounded. We offered to deposit the regular hotel tariff for the wine with the authorities, but they would not permit the seals to be removed. The proprietor of the hotel had left with the troops the day before, and so had most of the shopkeepers in Larissa. They came back by degrees, when the good behaviour of the Turks became known. In many cases the Greek inhabitants found that their shops and houses had been looted by the released prisoners and Greek irregulars. Wherever the Greek inhabitants stayed, they suffered no maltreatment from the Turks, and their property was untouched.



## CHAPTER VII.

## REVIEW OF THE WAR.

THIS will be a convenient point for a general review of the war between Turkey and Greece. The details are well known, and I have endeavoured to obtain an accurate narrative of those portions of the war which did not come under my personal observation by a careful study of the various accounts written by eye-witnesses with the two armies, Turk and Greek. The materials are ample, and though of course in many cases the accounts seem very conflicting, according to the natural prejudice or the very opposite points of view afforded by the two different sides, it is fairly easy to arrive at the truth.

Early in March it became clear that the Greek Government intended to provoke a war with Turkey. There were the despatch of Colonel Vassos' force to Crete, the firing on Turkish transports in Cretan waters, and the mobilising of troops in Thessaly to prove this

intention. The Turkish Government replied by mobilising the *corps d'armée* in Macedonia and by increasing the garrison of Janina to a full division. By the end of March there were some 50,000 Turkish troops under Edhem Pasha in and around Ellassona, close to the Greek frontier.

The Marshal wisely chose this position as his headquarters, for it lies within the angle formed by the sudden trend southwards of the Pindus mountain range. Ellassona was equally well placed for striking the Greeks if they should invade Macedonia either on the eastern or western side of the frontier. It was also close to the Melouna Pass, the principal road from Macedonia into Thessaly. The Greeks were collecting their forces at Larissa and Trikkala, and also on the Epirote frontier at Arta. The chief stimulus towards war came from a powerful and widespread secret society known as the Ethnike Hetairia (National Society). This association formed an *imperium in imperio*, which for a time almost controlled Greek politics. It embraced within its ranks many members of the Greek legislature and a large number of officers in the army. For the three months prior to the outbreak of war the Ethnike Hetairia was more powerful than the Government. Its secret fiats

were irresistible, and the actual filibustering band, whose inroad against Grevena directly caused the war, was armed, equipped, and despatched into Turkish territory by this dangerous association.

This Ethnike Hetairia was indeed a formidable and mischievous body. It was a secret society embracing nearly half the young men of Greece. Its leaders and inspirers were very ambitious and almost wholly irresponsible. Owing to its influence, the King and Royal Family were obliged to give in to the Cretan plot, and to head a dangerous movement which they could not control. The society issued its edicts, and forthwith arms and agitators were poured into Crete. Another secret edict compelled the King to send Colonel Vassos and his soldiers to Crete. A third edict forced a menacing mobilisation on the Thessalian frontier. The outside world little realised what a serious power for evil this Ethnike Hetairia wielded.

The Ethnike Hetairia was very active among all the Greek colonies in Asia Minor and in Egypt. It recruited among the young Greek subjects of the Sultan, and hundreds, even thousands of Greek lads and young men sailed from Constantinople, Smyrna, and Alexandria

to Greece. The Turkish authorities did not take very energetic steps to stop this martial emigration ; but these Hellenic volunteers will not have the best of times on their return to Ottoman territory. This society and the efforts of the Greek Government quite failed to stir up any trouble among the Greek population in Macedonia, who are neither discontented nor warlike. In Epirus there was rather more movement, but it amounted to very little.

The power of the Ethnike Hetairia waned in proportion as the war was unsuccessful and its policy was proved to have been disastrous. So fallen was the Ethnike Hetairia from its high estate that M. Rhallys, at the end of May, made bold to seize all its papers and threaten its officers with prosecution. Since this timely act of courage, little has been heard of the Ethnike Hetairia.

The melting of the snows at the end of March and the clearing of the passes and roads were bound to mark a critical time in the relations of the two countries. Accordingly the forces on both sides were considerably reinforced, and the tension became acute.

The line along which the two armies were opposed was a long one, over 200 miles. It

extended from the *Ægean* Sea near the Turkish frontier post of Platamona on the east, to the Adriatic on the west—that is to Arta and Prevesa. The country was, for the most part, exceedingly wild and broken. Nearly the whole Thessalian frontier line lay along the ridges of the mountain boundary, the Greek and Turkish blockhouses facing each other along the mountain tops. On the southern part of the Epirote frontier, near Arta, the Turkish territory was more level and exposed. The two chief centres were, on the Turkish side, for Macedonia and Thessaly, Elassona; for Epirus, Janina. On the Greek side, Larissa and Arta were the respective headquarters at the commencement of the war.

The real base of the Turkish army was Salonica, which had been connected with Constantinople by railway only at the end of 1896. Here the whole military organisation, the forwarding of troops, supplies, etc., was in the hands of a very able and careful officer, Kiazim Pasha. His efforts were well seconded by the Civil Governor, Riza Pasha, Vali of Salonica. The result was that the great masses of troops, nearly 200,000 in all, with the necessary supplies and ammunition, were forwarded to

the front without delay or hitch, and with a precision and order that were wonderful. The greatest credit is due to Kiazim Pasha for his organising power and success. The railway to Monastir ran 50 miles beyond Salonica to a small place called Kalaferia, and here the road transport began. Everything had to be carried by baggage animals or by rough carts from Kalaferia to Ellassona, a distance of 80 miles. But Salonica was the real base. Had the Turks not lost the command of the sea, the time and cost of their mobilisation and transport would have been less than half what they actually were.

On the Greek side, Volo was the base. This flourishing seaport (250 miles from Athens) is connected by rail with Larissa (38 miles) and with Pharsalos, Trikkala and Kalabaka (80 miles). The junction is at Valestinos, 10 miles from Volo, and is therefore a very important strategic point, as the war proved. The command of the sea enabled the Greeks to mobilise their forces with ease and rapidity. All their troops were sent by sea from the Piræus to Volo, and thence passed forward into Thessaly by the railway. The land road from Athens to the frontier is long and bad, and but for the

command of the sea Greek mobilisation would have been almost impossible.

The proposal of Austria to blockade Volo and the Piræus early in March, 1897, was therefore most reasonable. It would have prevented Greek mobilisation, and so have averted the war. It would have been the truest kindness to Greece. Therefore it is to be regretted that the fear of a little Phil-Hellene and Radical agitation in this country led the British Government to postpone its consent to that blockade.

Along 'the frontier' line of Thessaly and Epirus were massed, at the outbreak of the war, about 130,000 Ottoman troops and about 90,000 Greeks. The whole Turkish army of Thessaly was, under the supreme command of Edhem Pasha, whose headquarters, up to April 25th, were at Ellassona. The difficulty of communication with Epirus made that country, however, almost an independent command. Ahmed Hifzi Pasha and Mustapha Pasha led the Turks in Epirus, and their headquarters were at the old and famous fortress of Janina and at Louros.

When hostilities broke out, Edhem Pasha had about 100,000 of all arms under his immediate direction. These were divided into six divisions, under Hamdi, Hakki, Neschat, Hairi,

Memdouk and Haidar Pashas. The Crown Prince was the nominal commander-in-chief of the Greek forces in Thessaly, and he had some 70,000 men under his orders between Volo and Kalabaka, the chief force being collected just north of Larissa, between Tournavos and the Col di Melouna, with strong bodies thrown out right and left along the mountain boundary. At Arta, the Greek headquarters on the west, Colonel Manos was in command, with 15,000 men under his orders.

The actual war began on April 17th, when the Sultan and his Government at last decided to declare a state of war. Desultory fighting had been going on along the frontier for some days previously. Greek irregular troops had made several deliberate raids into Turkish territory, especially in the direction of Grevena and Nezeros. In the former there were ex-officers of the Greek regular army in command, and in the latter a considerable number of Greek regular troops took part. The provocation thus given to Turkey was great and intolerable, and there can be no doubt that the Sultan was by these raids entirely justified in formally declaring war.

The circumstances of these raids are peculiar and worthy of record. Fortunately a full and



reliable account exists in the letters of English correspondents with the Greek army who were present on the spot.

On April 9th a body of some 2000 irregulars assembled at Koniskos, close to Kalabaka, the terminus of the Volo-Pharsalos-Trikkala railway line. This band was organised by the *Ethnike Hetairia*, under the personal direction of M. Goussio. This gentleman was the Greek manager of an English bank at Alexandria and a prominent leader of the secret society. The movement was well known at Athens to be imminent, and was discussed there on the very day of its occurrence. The men were mostly reservists, and were armed with the regulation Gras rifle and bayonets of the Greek army. Each man had a badge embroidered with the letters E. E. (*ἑθνική ἑταιρία*). Their leaders were two retired Greek officers named Mylonas and Kapsapoulos. Under these were several well-known brigand chiefs, including Develis, Zermas and Makris. The last was killed at Baltimon.

After a solemn religious service, in which the band were blessed by a Greek priest, they crossed the frontier near Krania in three detachments, with the object of seizing Grevena and cutting the line of communication between the Turkish

armies in Thessaly and Epirus. Krania lies only five miles from the frontier, and is about thirteen miles north-east of the important Turkish position of Metzovo. • Grevena is fifteen miles north-north-east of Krania, the seat of a bishopric and the principal town of the district, which is chiefly peopled by Wallachians.

The raiders had issued a proclamation calling upon the Macedonians and Epirotes to rise *en masse*, but there was no response. At first, they had some trifling successes. They captured three or four small Turkish blockhouses and outposts, making eight prisoners and killing the same number of soldiers. They then attacked a company of Ottoman Nizams (regular troops) in the village of Baltimon. The lieutenant in command, when summoned to surrender, returned a point blank refusal, and said he and his men "would rather die at their post." These hundred Turks held the village against all attacks till Saturday night, the 10th, when they retired with trifling loss. A correspondent of the *Daily Chronicle*, telegraphing from the camp of the irregulars on April 10th, said :—

Early in the morning of Saturday I went over the snow and visited the scene of action. The station is in the middle of a poor village. The irregulars were running

round in unorganized bodies, and continually firing at the blockhouse without apparently making any impression on it. When I left to telegraph at noon the Turks still held out, but they were firing over our heads. They are probably taken prisoners by now. The movement is supposed to be general. I think only six Greeks were killed, including the leader, Makris. Many, however, were wounded.

The main body of the raiders advanced a few miles further, but Hakki Pasha's forces were gathering around them, and their line of retreat was threatened. Seifulah Bey, the most active staff officer in the Ottoman army, was on the watch. A desultory engagement ensued at Bougasi, and according to the *Times* correspondent, the Sixth Turkish Chasseurs, under Islam Pasha, defeated the invaders. The bulk of them fled back as rapidly as possible into Greek territory, with a loss of over 150 men. Eighty-six of the raiders were Italians, under the well-known Socialist deputy, Amilcar Cipriani. The cold and exposure—the snow was still deep on the ground—soon told on the weak constitutions of these Southern Italian revolutionists. Forty-one of the band deserted on April 10th, and returned to Kalabaka in a wretched plight before the main body came back.

Thus ended ingloriously the first enterprise of the Ethnike Hetairia. The early telegrams

to Athens were of the usual grandiose style. A whole Turkish battalion had been cut to pieces, Grevena had been captured, and the Turkish armies had been cut in half. One Hellenic newspaper, quoted by the *Times*, wrote :—

The die is now cast. A beginning has been made, and a successful one. It is all over with diplomacy, negotiations, identic notes, and blockades. The eloquent voice of the rifle has spoken—*the voice to which all must listen.*

These reports were all moonshine, and when the truth leaked out corresponding depression was caused at Athens. The *Times* correspondent at Athens thus describes the effect produced on April 15th :—

The unsuccessful issue of the first raid into Macedonia has deepened the general exasperation, and also led to much angry recrimination. The Ethnike Hetairia blames the Government, and the Government blames the Ethnike Hetairia. It is quite evident that the society expected that its forces would receive the support of the regular troops, and an outbreak of war would thus be precipitated. Some journals give vent to bitter recriminations against all the authorities. They declare that mistrust exists between the Court and the Government ; that the nation knows what it wants, but its rulers are wavering and undecided. They ask how it is possible that 2500 Greeks should be surrounded and compelled to retreat without receiving any assistance from the Greek army. A pessimistic tone is now becoming noticeable, but *there is no diminution in the clamour for war.*

M. Delyannis, the Greek Premier, denied that there were any regular officers or troops in the raid. M. Skouzes tried to make out that the Turks were the aggressors. The Greek commander is said to have warned Edhem Pasha of the expedition, stating that he was himself powerless to prevent it.

Other inroads were also made by the Greeks into Turkish territory almost simultaneously. According to the *Daily Chronicle* of April 14th, these incursions took place (1) into Epirus across the river Arta, where thousands of Greeks were said to have moved toward Janina; (2) at Baltimon, which has been described; (3) at Diskata, 27 miles north-west of Tournavos; and (4) from Lake Nezeros, north of the Vale of Tempe, on the far east. None of these inroads, except that at Baltimon, near Grevena, appears to have had any serious result, and reliable details are lacking.

Much indignation was caused in Turkey by these irregular attacks, and an official protest was sent by the Porte to the Great Powers. But the Sultan was exceedingly loath to begin war, and matters quieted down by the 12th. Most of the European papers continued to write in an optimist sense, and very few expected that

a regular war would result. Count Goluchowski was of a different opinion. But so disinclined was English opinion to believe in the possibility of war, that neither of the two great English Press agencies had any correspondent with the Turks, and only two newspapers, the *Times* and *Daily Telegraph*, were represented in Edhem Pasha's camp. Reuters had an admirable correspondent, Mr. H. A. Gwynne, at Edhem Pasha's headquarters early in April. The news of the inroad at Krania determined me to proceed to the front without delay, and I started on April 14th.

The Turkish campaign in Thessaly divides itself both chronologically and geographically into three phases. The first consists of the declaration of war and the battles along the frontier ridges for the possession of the mountain boundary. This covers the period between Friday, April 16th, and Thursday, April 22nd, when the Turkish columns had all forced the Greeks off the mountain barriers, and had themselves got a foothold on the edge of the Thessalian plain.

The second phase or period covers the battles of Mati-Deliler and the passage of the Reveni defile, with the consequent capture of Tournayos

and Larissa. This embraces the days between Friday, April 23rd, and Tuesday, May 4th, and includes the first battle of Valestinos. During this period Edhem Pasha finally broke down the resistance of the Greek army in the open, and he occupied the capital and the whole northern half of Thessaly. The Greek forces retreated in panic haste to the Valestinos-Pharsalos-Trikkala line, and were allowed to entrench themselves there. Edhem remained practically inactive from Sunday, April 25th, when Larissa fell, down to Wednesday, May 5th, when he attacked the Greeks all along their new line. The abortive assault made by Hakki Pasha upon Valestinos on Friday, April 30th, was not intended by the Mushir to be more than a reconnaissance, though it developed into a bloody battle. No doubt the drain upon the Turkish ammunition was very heavy, and the difficulty of supplies was considerable; but, making every allowance, this long wait of ten days is difficult to understand.

The third phase covers the remainder of the war, the period between May 5th and May 17th, when the Greeks were driven out of all Southern Thessaly by the battles of Valestinos, Pharsalos and Domokos. This period was marked by the

largest and most sanguinary conflicts, and by the heaviest losses to the Turks. Their losses at Valestinos and Pharsalos probably exceeded those of all the rest of the campaign in Thessaly. The Greek losses, too, were heavy both at Pharsalos and Valestinos.

When the war began, there were six Turkish divisions, numbering about 90,000 men, at or within striking distance of the frontier. There were the 1st division, commanded by Hairi Pasha, at Domenik; the 2nd division, commanded by Neschat Pasha, at Skumpa; the 3rd and 4th divisions, commanded respectively by Memdouk Pasha and Haidar Pasha, at Ellassona; the 5th division, commanded by Hakki Pasha, at Diskata, west of Skumpa; and the 6th division, commanded by Hamdi Pasha, at Lepto-Karya. There were also the weak cavalry division commanded by Suleiman Pasha at Ormanli, and twelve batteries of artillery under Riza Pasha at Ellassona. In addition to these, the 7th division under Husni Pasha reached Ellassona during the first week in May, and the 8th division was mobilised there just at the close of the war. There was another corps of about 10,000 men under Islam Pasha assembled at Diskata. There were also two divisions in Epirus number-



ing about 30,000 men under Ahmed Hifzi Pasha and Mustapha Pasha.

The Turkish infantry were all armed with the Martini-Henry rifle and long bayonet—a most excellent weapon. One brigade only of the 2nd Division, Neschat Pasha's, had the new Mauser rifle, and this brigade suffered heavily at Domokos. The 7th and 8th Divisions, which were mobilised late and did no fighting, also had the Mauser. The uniform was a blue tunic and trousers, with sandals, and, of course, the fez. Most of the uniforms that I saw were worn and shabby. Towards the end of the war the soldiers often used portions of the clothing they had captured from the Greeks. The Albanians wore a low, white fez, or skull-cap. Greatcoats were common, but not universal, and every soldier had a cartridge-belt over his shoulders and a tin water-bottle. Their other belongings were carried in various fashions on the soldiers' backs.

Only a small portion of the Turkish force belonged to the regular army on active service, that is to the Nizams. Three-quarters were Redifs or reserve men, between the ages of twenty-five and fifty. The average age was between thirty and thirty-five. These Redifs were strong, well-grown, hardy peasants, who seemed capable of

any fatigue, and who rarely succumbed to disease. There were also some 8,000 to 10,000 Albanians. All the Turkish battalions that I inspected were recruited on the territorial principle, and were called after the town or district they came from. One of the finest battalions we came across was that of Trebizond, truly a magnificent body of men, all as big as our Grenadier Guards and much more hardy.

The cavalry were very small in numbers, but excellent in quality. The men were tall and stalwart troopers and good horsemen. The horses were small and ragged-looking, between fourteen and fifteen hands, but extraordinarily wiry, enduring and sure-footed. They had a good deal of Arab blood in them, and stood an amount of hard work that would have knocked up English horses in a few days. The Greeks had an idea that the Turkish cavalry were Circassians, because they wore black lambskin caps or kalpacks, and they were in mortal terror of these *soi-disant* Circassians; but not more than a quarter of the troopers were Circassians. They carried long swords, and a rifle and shoulder-belt of cartridges. Their uniform was a short blue jacket and trousers, with long boots. Their saddles were old-fashioned and wooden,

and they mostly had large fanciful stirrups of Oriental pattern.

The Turkish artillery was good; the guns, 3-inch Krupps with 12-lb. shell; and the limbers, carriages and guns themselves were all in good condition. Each battery had six guns, sixty horses, and eighty men. The horses were excellent; but the practice made by the artillery during the war was not good, and Mr. Bigham says that the officers wanted training and the men technical skill. He has a better opinion of the Greek artillery, though up to the time that I left the seat of war, its practice was, and had been, very poor. There were three batteries of horse artillery (9-pounders) with the cavalry division, and three batteries of mountain guns on mules. The artillery did very little practical work, though the head of "Corps Artillery," Riza Pacha, was a first-class officer, highly trained, active, and intelligent. The engineering of the army was not very efficient. The transport was all done by horses or mules, and the telegraph was very slow and insufficient. The medical staff and hospital service were, so far as I could judge, good. The surgeons that I saw were willing and skilful, and the supply of instruments, tents, and antiseptics adequate; though

I understand that there was an insufficiency at the second battle of Valestinos and at Domokos.

The general staff of the Turkish army in Thessaly was excellent. Most of the best men had been trained in Germany, and spoke German and French. They were keen, active, skilful, and patriotic gentlemen, who would have done credit to any army. The divisional generals were mostly inferior, and their staffs were by no means as good as they ought to have been.

The Greek army was about two-thirds that of the Turks. Probably never more than 90,000 men were under arms in Thessaly and Epirus. The Greek rifle was the Gras, of a French pattern, with a bolt action. The uniform was a blue tunic with loose trousers and a kepé, which gave the Greeks a very Frenchified appearance. The great bulk of the regulars were inferior in physique and entirely deficient in courage and staying power. The Euzonoi wore a sort of quilted kilt, and head-dress very like a fez. Some of the Euzonoi, mountaineers, were fine men and good shots; these fought well on occasions, notably at Melouna, Valestinos, and Pharsalos. The mass of the Greek soldiers

made off as soon as the Turkish advance came within six hundred yards.

The artillery are said to have been good, though deficient in numbers. The guns were Krupp, and the officers were fairly well trained. The cavalry hardly existed at all. The transport and supply were wretched, and the reserves of ammunition deficient. There was a small foreign legion of about five hundred men, made up chiefly of Italians and English. Most of the former behaved badly at first, though they improved with practice. The English seem to have shown fair cohesion and courage. The irregular troops, for which the Ethnike Hetairia were responsible, were a nuisance and a source of weakness. They were the first and loudest in boasting, and also the first to leave the field. In fact, the foreign correspondents with the Greek army always knew when the critical moment of the battle was at hand by seeing the irregulars trailing away from the firing line. The only Greek officer of rank who at all distinguished himself was General Smolenski. The much abused Colonel Manos might have done well in Epirus had he been properly supported at Athens.

For the following statistics regarding the Turkish army I am indebted to the excellent

little work upon the war which has been published by Mr. Clive Bigham, the *Times* correspondent with Edhem Pasha. According to Mr. Bigham, a Turkish division is made up of about 12,500 men; there are 2 brigades (6000 each) to a division; 2 regiments (3000 each) to a brigade; 4 battalions (750 each) to a regiment, and 4 companies to a battalion. In addition, each division has a squadron of cavalry (120 men), 3 batteries (6 guns and 80 men each), and some 140 non-combatants. A cavalry regiment (1000 men) embraces 5 squadrons of 200 sabres each, and an artillery battalion has 3 batteries (18 guns).

Perhaps the most striking feature about the Turkish army is the extraordinary health of the average Turkish soldier. He comes from the finest material in the world—the temperate Ottoman peasantry both of Asia and Europe. Accustomed to live on bread and water, with no stimulants and little meat, in a fine climate and out of doors, the Turkish peasant has a constitution that defies fatigue and disease, and can accomplish marvels on a minimum of food. Venereal disease, with all its terrible after results, is almost unknown among the Turks.

The courage of the Ottoman is at once hereditary and religious. Descended from generations of fighting men, who have rarely shown fear or avoided the face of an enemy, the Osmanli has an inborn ancestral pride and valour that gives him a dauntless courage in battle. His religion too strengthens his natural bravery, for it teaches him that eternal bliss is the reward of those Ottomans who die in battle for their faith and their country.

During the campaign the Turkish army was fairly well fed. According to Mr. Bigham, they had rice, soup and meat as well as tobacco every day. The number of soldiers that were disabled from disease on their way to the front did not amount to .5 per cent. That is only 1 in 200. The hospitals, especially those at Salonica and Servidje, were well arranged and clean, and the doctors and attendants were well trained and assiduous. The Red Crescent Hospital service sent out by Sir Edgar Vincent and the Ottoman Bank did excellent work and were very popular with the Turkish soldiers themselves. The wounded men showed the most marvellous fortitude in suffering, and the European surgeons with the Red Crescent had many stories of the unflinching courage with which the Turks bore

the most painful operations. Mr. Bigham writes as follows of the valour of the Ottoman soldiers, but I hardly think he does full justice to the motive of their courage :—

The great mass of the regimental officers were either poor Turkish gentlemen, pleasant and brave enough, though not particularly skilful in their profession, or hard, old rankers : men who had served thirty or forty years in the army, and had slowly risen to the rank of captain or major. These latter were very like sergeants in their ideas and methods, but they had a great hold over the men, and their courage and endurance were inconceivable. As a matter of fact the word courage is not strictly applicable to the Turk ; he is, as far as I can make out, mentally impervious to any sensation of fear, and what passes with us for the most wonderful daring is rather a positive lack of any appreciation of danger. The Albanian, on the other hand, has a very shrewd idea of the damage caused by a bullet, and of the practical advantage of cover. This is, however, again somewhat premature.

On Saturday, April 17th, the Sultan, in consequence of the Greek raids into Ottoman territory, and on the advice of his Council of State, declared war against Greece. Prince Mavrocordato, the Greek Envoy at Constantinople, received his passports. The Turkish Envoy at Athens was recalled. Greek subjects residing in Turkey were given fourteen days to remove from Ottoman soil. The immediate



cause of the formal declaration of war was an inroad of Greek regulars into Ottoman territory at Karya on April 16th, which lies north of the Vale of Tempe, near Lake Nezeros, and which is three or four miles within Turkish territory. This developed into almost a pitched battle on the 17th, and it took some twelve battalions of Hamdi Pasha's division to repulse the Greek attack. A state of war had practically existed all along the frontier since the Greek raids of April 9th.

Almost immediately the whole frontier broke out into flame and blood. A series of fierce conflicts took place between the two armies all along the boundary line from Nezeros on the east to beyond Damasi on the south-west, a distance of some fifty miles. In almost every case the Greeks took the offensive and at first gained some slight advantages. Thus at Melouna, where the chief fighting took place, they surrounded the Turkish blockhouse, occupied the whole pass, and two battalions actually descended into the plain late at night and menaced Ellassona itself. Their advance, however, was very brief. Haidar Pasha, commanding the 4th division, acting under Edhem Pasha's directions, attacked them in force and

drove them up to the hill-tops. Here, on the summit of the pass, a desperate conflict ensued. The Turkish blockhouse, with its garrison of fifty men, which had held its own all the time, was rescued. The Greek blockhouse that faces it at a distance of less than 100 yards was taken and retaken four times before it was left in the hands of the Turks. The Greeks fought well at Melouna. They were mostly Euzonoi—i.e., mountaineers—and superior in physique to the average Greek soldier, who is physically a very poor creature. The final *coup* was given to the Greek defence at Melouna by the advance of the 3rd Turkish Division, under Memdouk Pasha, along the ridge to the right of the Pass. The brigade commanded by Hafiz Pasha took three blockhouses south-west of that in Melouna itself at the point of the bayonet.

The losses in these Melouna combats were considerable. The Turks lost over 200 *hors de combat*, and the Greek loss must have been heavier, probably at least 500. At Athens it was estimated that the Greeks lost 1000 killed and wounded at Melouna; but then they put down the Turkish loss as heavier. Here fell a gallant old veteran, Hafiz Pasha, leading his brigade.

The following account of Hafiz Pasha's heroic death was given by Reuter's correspondent :—

Among the dead is Hafiz Pasha, a veteran of the Russo-Turkish war. He rode bareheaded in advance of his men, and not all his eighty years could curb his ardour. His orderly begged him to dismount as the bullets began to whistle above the men ; but Hafiz's only answer was, "In the war with Russia I never dismounted ; why should I do so now ? Forward, children !". A minute later he reeled, hit on his left arm ; and again his staff begged him to dismount and retire to the rear. A second bullet shattered his right hand ; a third messenger of death struck him in the throat, as he was cheering on his men, and, cutting the spinal cord, killed him instantly.

Even the *Daily News* was forced to pay a tribute to the splendid courage of this dauntless veteran of eighty-two years of age. It said :—

Could there be a more touching story of bravery than that which tells us this morning how Hafiz Pasha met his death ? He was a hero of fourscore. It is a dramatic incident—thrillingly dramatic—the reverse of the common story of the charmed life in battle. The last shot was merciful to the maimed old hero. It put an instantaneous end to suffering, and gave him the glorious death he sought in preference to the abdication of command.

On the far left Hamdi Pasha slowly drove back the Greeks who had invaded Turkish territory and attacked him at Karya. Reinforce-

ments of artillery and two battalions of infantry were sent to him from Ellassona. By the 22nd the Greeks were in full retreat from the Nezeros and Rapsani district. A portion of this Greek force retired south-eastwards, crossing the Peneius at the bridge below the Vale of Tempe, and went along the coast through Tsaghesi towards Volo. They broke down the bridge over the Peneius behind them. This led to my subsequent troubles and capture; it was about the only engineering attempt made by the Greeks in retreat to impede the advance of the enemy. The bulk of the Greek right wing fell back through the Rapsani Pass and joined the main body then drawn up on the Deliler-Mati line in front of Tournavos.

Irregular fighting went on for three days along the heights south-westwards from Melouna to Damasi. Here the two divisions of Neschat Pasha at Skumpa and Hairi Pasha at Damasi were engaged, first in resisting Greek attacks, and then in pressing the Greek assailants back through the Skumpa and Reveni Passes into the Thessalian plain.

The great mountain range, that forms the frontier, trends sharply southwards from Melouna for some fifteen miles, and Tournavos

lies in the level ground just beyond the south-eastern base of this huge mountainous projection. The moment therefore that Hairi Pasha was in a position to debouch from the Reveni Pass into the plain, the whole position of the Greek main body, which extended some ten miles north of Tournavos, from Mati to Deliler, was jeopardised, and retreat became a necessity. At first Hairi seems to have held his own with some difficulty against the vigorous onslaught of Colonel Smolenski, the only Greek officer that won any laurels during the war. Smolenski's success, however, was soon made nugatory by other failures, and by the 23rd his corps had to retire back through the Reveni Pass upon Larissa. Neschat Pasha at Skumpá with the 2nd division was engaged in clearing away the Greeks from the blockhouses and ridges between Damasi and Melouna. This he accomplished by the 21st. Only one Greek position remained intact, and that was the lofty and almost impregnable summit of Kritiri, overlooking Tournavos. Several assaults were made upon this tremendous natural fortress between the 17th and the 23rd, but without success.

A continuous and heavy fire was kept up against Kritiri on the 20th and 21st, but without

effect. The slopes were steep and strongly entrenched, and the Turks lost over two hundred men in these attempts. There was no special object in taking Kritiri, as it would have been safe to mask the position. Kritiri did not command the main road to Tournavos, though it did dominate the Skumpa Pass. Eventually the Greeks abandoned this position on the 23rd, the evening of their flight to Larissa.

At the opening of the campaign the Greeks had their army of Thessaly divided into two corps, numbering over 60,000 men, with their headquarters at Larissa and Trikkala. These were commanded respectively by Generals Macrise and Mavromichalis. Although their numbers were less than those of the Turks, the Greeks were in the inner line, and their means of communication were far better. They enjoyed the invaluable advantage of a railway, which ran from the sea-base at Volo both to Larissa and Trikkala. Had the Greeks possessed the genius or the courage to make at the outset a vigorous and concentrated attack upon any one point of the long and scattered Turkish line, it might have gone badly with the Turks. The Greek officers were, however, by general agreement, very inferior, and the Greek General Staff

seems to have been devoid of plans either for offence or defence. According to Mr. Bennet Burleigh, General Macrise had 35,000 under his command in and north of Larissa. He speaks well of General Macrise, a tall elderly man of over sixty, "a cheerful, wary, and resolute leader." He was made Chief of Staff when the supreme command was taken over by the Crown Prince Constantine. General Movromichalis, who is also tall and sixty, Mr. Burleigh describes as a strict disciplinarian, but inferior in tactical skill to General Macrise.

The same authority expresses a poor opinion of Prince Constantine, and complains bitterly of the neglect of the Greek Commanders and General Staff, either to fortify Larissa itself or to throw up earthworks to cover the approaches to the capital. The Crown Prince is blamed for not taking any active part in the fighting, though it is hardly the duty of a Commander-in-Chief to expose himself. Mr. Burleigh, on the other hand, highly praises General Smolenski, who is younger (45 years of age), and of Bavarian origin. Smolenski is said to have held the pass of Reyeni with seven weak battalions for a week against a whole Turkish division. He did not retire till after the panic flight of his com-

patriots from Tournavos, on April 23rd. My own opinion of General Smolenski's ability and success is also favourable.

A curious story of a mistaken order for retreat, given by the Crown Prince at midday on April 19th, is repeated by Mr. Burleigh. It seems incredible, but Greek officers did such extraordinary things, especially the Headquarters Staff, that it may possibly have happened. The order is said to have been cancelled within three hours, and a counter-order given to re-advance. Meanwhile, however, the hill of Gritsovali had been abandoned, and the attempt to retake it from the Turks the next day is said to have cost General Mavromichalis 2000 men. This, surely, must be an exaggeration. It is clear, too, that Mr. Burleigh has confused in his narrative the village of Dereli, near Baba, at the entrance to the Vale of Tempe, with Deliler, about three miles east of Mati, and nine miles north-east of Tournavos. It was the capture of Deliler by Hamdi's troops on the evening of the 23rd that turned the Greek right flank and rendered the retreat to Larissa inevitable. The retreat ought not, of course, to have degenerated into a panic flight, but retreat was necessary to save the Greek army.



Mr. Burleigh's opinion of the Greek organization and leadership, as given in the *Fortnightly Review* for July, 1897, may well be quoted here :—

Whilst General Macrise kept his division about 35,000 strong between Larissa and the frontier town of Turnavos, he could threaten the enemy at passes a score of miles apart. He might even by a flank movement hurry them through the vale of Tempe and been upon Turkish territory under the eastern slopes of Olympus, supported by the fleet, before Edhem had stirred from Elassona. The safety of Larissa and much of Thessaly would have been temporarily secured by roughly damming the brawling Peneius river with trees and rocks. Part of the country would have been put under water, and the bridging of the river would have been difficult for the Turks. A score of things could and should have been done that were left undone. General Mavromichali from his position menaced the Turks guarding the passes on their side from Boorassi eastward to Kalabaka. War with the Turk has been, according to the Greek, that which he desired beyond all else. Yet they made no adequate preparation for the contingency they provoked, and plunged into the campaign, without an intelligence department, without maps, without field-glasses, without sufficient provision for signalling, and with the most incompetent body of officers that ever troops had set over them. In my experience rank and file are much alike in fighting quality the world over amongst Caucasians. It is the training and the officers that make the difference as to the relative value of troops in action. To look at, the Greek officers seemed well enough, until the Turkish shells and bullets began to fly about. There were some, however,

who, though knowing their danger, and devoutly crossing themselves as every hurtling shell burst near, yet stood their ground, and did their work right bravely. But the majority were not of that cast.

And Mr. E. J. Dillon, well known as a Phil-Hellene, gives in the *Contemporary Review* for July, 1897, the following severe criticism of the Greek Army :—

The Greek Government were well aware that the Hellenic army was utterly untrained for active service, that many of the superior officers had been appointed and promoted for qualities which are usually more appreciated at courts and in salons or picnics than in camps and on battlefields; that, with some few brilliant exceptions, an officer who was this and nothing more had little chance of advancement and none of distinction; that the young officers who from time to time were sent abroad to study invariably had powerful friends at home, and seldom possessed the intellectual and military qualities which would have enabled them to profit by their sojourn in foreign lands; that military manœuvres were practically unknown in Greece, and that not one branch of the Service had been trained to discharge even on a small scale the duties which they would be suddenly called upon to fulfil on a large scale in war time. The main salient characteristic of the army was its utter lack of discipline. The inferior officers, avid of instruction and eager for a chance of distinguishing themselves, had uniformly met with cinderella-like treatment from their superiors in time of peace; and not only were they prone to criticise their superiors, but they had the

firm demoralising conviction, that the most damaging criticisms were well founded.

The fact is the Army and Navy had always been regarded as integral portions of the electoral machine by means of which ministers kept their respective parties in power. The nation paid the money down, and the Premier chose the people who spent it, without worrying as to how it was spent, on the principle of live and let live. Some of these owed their promotion to recommendations from on high, others to requests or menaces from influential folks below; but very few were chosen on account of their aptitudes and talents, which alone fit an officer to lead men to victory.

The capture of all the frontier ridges and the mountain passes by the Turks concluded the first phase or period of the campaign.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## SECOND PERIOD OF THE WAR.

THE second period of the campaign began on April 23rd and lasted till May 4th inclusive. It embraced the battles of Mati-Deliler on April 23rd, the retreat and panic of the Greek army, the occupation of Tournavos, Larissa, and Trikkala by the Turks, and their practical control of the northern half of Thessaly.

On Friday morning, April 23rd, Edhem Pasha and his staff reached the Col di Melouna at 9.30, and were busy for two hours studying maps and planning movements. The correspondents were all on the *qui vive*, for general orders had been issued that no telegrams whatever were to be allowed on that day. This was rightly thought to be evidence of important movements. It was reported that Hamdi, on the far left, was about to debouch into the plain from Rapsani; and that Hairi, on the far right, was advancing through the Reveni Pass upon Zarkos or Tournavos.

On the preceding Wednesday, the 21st, Memdouk Pasha, with the 3rd Division and an

unattached brigade under Mahomet Pasha, together with the Cavalry Division, had descended into the plain from the Melouna Pass. They took up a position from Karadere, the water spring, westwards for some four miles, and there was some futile cannonading between the opposing artillery on the 21st and 22nd. Hakki Pasha came up to Melouna with a brigade from Diskata on April 21st; Haidar Pasha, with the 4th Division, was engaged in improving the road over the Melouna Pass, and making it passable for the artillery. The unattached brigade was on the extreme left, and during the day joined hands with the 6th Division, under Hamdi Pasha.

A furious cannonade began at eleven o'clock and lasted until four. The Turks had six batteries and the Greeks five, at a distance of over 3000 yards apart. The Turkish guns were ranged in the open, just in front of the cool waters of Karadere. The Greek batteries extended from the edge of the spur that runs down into the plain from below Kritiri, close to Deliler, on the right. In the centre was an oblong rising, or mamelon, which gave the Greek guns there posted some good cover. There was a vast expenditure of powder and shells, with very

little result. The Turks only admitted a loss of three wounded after four hours' cannonade, and yet their guns were unprotected. At mid-day a cannonade broke out on the far left, accompanied by heavy rifle firing. This was in and around the villages of Karatsali and Deliler. After some time flames broke out in Deliler, and quite half the village was destroyed. The firing ceased both at Mati and Deliler soon after four o'clock, and it did not appear as if either side had gained any substantial advantage; but, about 6.30, the musketry fire broke out afresh with redoubled vigour. It seemed concentrated on some outlying houses south and west of Deliler. In a few minutes we could see men on foot hurrying from the houses and orchards towards the river which runs south of Deliler, and a small body of horsemen retiring south-westwards. This was the retreat of the Greek infantry and cavalry, and this success of Edhem's forces turned the Greek right and rendered a general retirement inevitable. As I have said in Chapter V., we saw the whole of this engagement from the summit of the Melouna Col. spread out before us like a panorama.

The account of the battle of Mati-Deliler, given by Reuter's correspondent with the Greeks,

on the afternoon of April 23, entirely confirms the description given above, which I had written before seeing his despatch. According to this correspondent, the Greek right wing at Deliler consisted of eight battalions, 8000 strong, under General Mavromichalis. The left wing at Mati had five battalions of 5000 men. The artillery were strong, six batteries of thirty-six guns. There was also a cavalry brigade of five squadrons, probably about 500 men. A battalion of Euzonoi were entrenched on the low hill in the Greek centre. The Turks he estimates at 9000 strong, with twenty-two guns. A heavy artillery duel was kept up during the morning in front of Mati. At one o'clock three Turkish battalions moved from Karatsali and attacked the village of Kutavi, close to Deliler, on the Greek right. This was vigorously defended by the Greeks under Mavromichalis. The Greeks were reinforced and held Kutavi, though the Turks advanced their line by some 2500 yards. At four o'clock the Greek left was again cannonaded by the Turks, but the Greeks claimed to have silenced the Turkish battery. Kutavi is the same as Musalar.

In a later despatch the same correspondent explains that it was thought that the battle had ended for the day, but that the firing broke out

again at 6.30 with much violence. The Turks shelled Kutavi and Deliler with two batteries, and their infantry being reinforced with two battalions, renewed the assault upon Kutavi and Deliler. The impression at the Greek headquarters was that the Turkish attack was repulsed; but, adds the correspondent, a force of Turkish cavalry rode out from the woods behind Kutavi and joined some Turkish horsemen that had come up from Rapsani and Dereli at the entrance of the Vale of Tempe. Hamdi's division thus joined hands with Haidar. Kutavi and Deliler were in flames, and the correspondent expected to see the battle renewed in the morning. In the night, however, the Greeks retired, and the famous panic occurred. •

This is by far the most accurate account of any battle that appeared on the Greek side. There is only one mistake, and that is as to the result of the last Turkish attack. Deliler was actually taken by the Turks at seven o'clock, and this success together with the arrival of Hamdi's division decided the battle and the fate of Northern Thessaly. Retreat was essential for the Greeks in order to save their army.

The loss of the Turks in the day's fighting was slight—about 250 men *hors de combat*;



that of the Greeks was probably between 300 and 400.

That night we went back with the Mushir late to Ellassona. All slept there in ignorance of the complete *débâcle* that was taking place in the Greek army. In my opinion, retreat was the only means of saving the Greek army. Five Turkish divisions, numbering with cavalry and artillery at least 70,000 men, and flushed with victory, could have concentrated either for a battle *en champ clos*, or upon Larissa. The Turkish artillery was much superior both in numbers and quality. The Turkish cavalry, though scanty enough, was excellent, and far stronger than the few mounted men possessed by the Greeks. A sixth Turkish division was close at hand. The Greeks could not have mustered more than 50,000 men, if so many, for the defence of Larissa. A defeat would have been certain, and a defeat would have meant nothing less than the annihilation or capture of the whole Greek army. Two things are inexplicable: the first, the extraordinary panic that seized the Greek army on the night of the 23rd; the second, the failure of the Turks to keep in touch with the flying Greeks or to take any advantage of their panic.

The following account of the Greek panic on the night of the 23rd is taken from Mr. Burleigh's article in the *Fortnightly* on April 24th :—

The whole army was on the march, and had got five or six miles from the battlefield, or close to Turnavos, when the unaccountable mad panic seized them. Some say it originated one way, some another. Cavalry and artillery, to escape from an imaginary danger, charged through their own infantry and galloped towards Larissa. Rifles were fired, blows were struck, men and animals were thrown down, and vehicles were overturned and smashed. The army broke into pieces and became a furious rabble, which fled by roads and fields south as hard as most could run. Arms and ammunition and baggage were cast aside wholesale. The Greek officers, as a rule, behaved worse than the men, for they led the fleeing mob, and many of them never stopped until they reached Pharsala or Volo. Shamefaced pretence was made that a stand could be made at Larissa, but no serious attempt was made to stop the fugitives, who streamed through the town in the early hours, and continued their flight on to Pharsala. Neither for that nor other flagrant acts of desertion in face of the enemy have I heard of one Greek being shot, "pour encourager les autres." The whilom Greek army was a mob convinced that the Turkish cavalry was upon their heels, though it was never near them. It gave them the strength of despair, and so covered afoot fifty to sixty miles within twenty-four hours. The inhabitants of Larissa and all the surrounding country, terrified at the sudden calamity, were left by the military and civic authorities, without hint or warning, to shift for themselves.

With regard to Edhem's failure to cut off the Greek army on Friday, April 23rd, it will be only fair to quote the following, which is interesting if not quite satisfactory. ' According to Mr. Stevens, of the *Daily Mail*, Edhem Pasha said to him :—

“ I cannot imagine why the Greeks have abandoned their position. It is naturally strong, and they have spent weeks of time and thousands of money in fortifying it. They said they wanted to fight, and we were ready to fight. I do not understand why they have run away. It is annoying. I only wanted them to stay six hours more to crush them completely.”

This was a long speech for Edhem, who is a man of deeds, not words. His naïve surprise at the astuteness of the Greeks in clearing out before he had inclosed them in his net amused me. But his eyes did not twinkle. He only said, slowly and gravely, “ Our Albanian regiments have a bad habit. They are fond of music ; they will sing when they march. Six battalions of them were moving on a village, to cut off the Greek line of retreat, and a Greek priest heard them singing, as their custom is. He warned the Greek officer just in time ; else we should have had the Crown Prince to dinner.”

While Edhem Pasha and his staff were slowly moving from Melouna towards the capital of Thessaly, the advance cavalry occupied Tournavos on Saturday morning. It was quite deserted both by the Greek troops and by its inhabitants,

all except six families, who were not harmed. Although Edhem Pasha consented to ride into Tournavos, where he arrived about 2 P.M. on the 24th, the Mushir decided not to spend the night there, but to go back to the spring at Karadere, where his tents were pitched, and where his field telegraph had reached. The line was found intact right on to Tournavos and Larissa. Neither to the roads nor to the telegraph did it occur to the Greeks in their retreat to do any harm.

On the night of the 24th Von Grumbkof Pasha, a very able German officer, who has the post of Inspector General of the Turkish Artillery, made a reconnaissance with a squadron of cavalry. It was soon discovered that the Greeks had fled from Larissa as well as from Tournavos. Very early the next morning Grumbkof Pasha and Seifulah Bey advanced with several squadrons of cavalry and a battery of horse artillery upon Larissa. Hearing some firing in the city, Von Grumbkof had three cannon shots fired over the town. Grumbkof and Seifulah then crossed the big stone bridge which spans the Peneius. They were warned as to dynamite that had been placed in the roadway in order to blow up the bridge. The story of this dynamite is a curious one. .

The *Standard* correspondent at Vienna sent the following account to that paper of May 7th :—

Grumbkof Pacha, who is now in Constantinople, was interviewed yesterday by the correspondent of the *Neue Freie Presse* about his entry into Larissa. The Pacha said, "I was on the point of crossing the stone bridge when an old man came to meet me, crying, 'Take care, Pacha, the bridge is undermined!' I crossed, despite the warning, and then ordered Sabit Bey, the pioneer major, to search for dynamite bombs, of which three were found and thrown into the water. At the same time, a shot rang out, and the old man who had warned me dropped. We seized the culprit—a Greek bandit, one of the four hundred released prisoners—and I ordered that he should be placed against a wall and shot for having murdered the old man; but my people said that an Imperial Iradé would be required for executing a prisoner, and I had to let the murderer go scot free. This may serve you as an instance of Turkish tolerance during the present war. In the Crown Prince's palace I found various letters, of which one, from the Minister of War, was in reply to complaints about the cheating carried on by the Army contractors. The present Turkish Army is one of the finest the Ottoman Empire ever sent into the field. The General Staff is excellent, and as to the men, when my Adjutant said to one of the Redifs, 'Are you not sorry to have left your family?' he received the reply, 'What, sorry? We are happy to sacrifice our miserable lives for the Padisha.' And others exclaimed, 'Why, we were only born for this glorious day.' It is not possible to do full justice to the valour of them all, from the General to the lowest private."

As we rode past some Turkish battalions going into Thessaly, Grumbkof Pasha said to me, during the fight at Mati-Deliler, "You see these poor soldiers, tired, dusty, badly-clad, living on almost nothing. I tell you, my dear sir, they are the finest soldiers in the world."

The Mussulman and Jewish inhabitants welcomed the Turks and told them of the reign of terror that had prevailed in Larissa since Friday, when the civil governor had released all the gaol-birds and given them rifles.

Edhem Pasha was not aware of the occupation of Larissa till after it was a *fait accompli*. We—that is, Von Sonnenberg, Ellis and our escort—arrived at one o'clock on Sunday, four hours after Von Grumbkof entered the city, and the same moment that an *aide-de-camp* of the Sultan, Nedjib Bey, and an *aide-de-camp* of the Mushir rode in at full speed.

Larissa occupies a lovely site on the right bank of the Pencius, which runs swiftly past the western and northern fronts of the city. The river is here deep and rapid, and lined with beautiful trees and rich green pasturage. The view from the green mosque over the bridge and river and the fertile plains beyond, which are watered by the classic river, is one of the most

delightful in Thessaly, if not in Greece. The town itself is fairly well built, a mixture of ancient and modern, the latter the least interesting. The palace, the ancient seraglio, the konak in the principal square, the bank and the Hotel d'Olympe are all pretentious buildings, while villas of good size, built in the square French style, are numerous. Some of these belong to Turkish families, who still own a good deal of the land in Thessaly. There are many minarets and some mosques still remaining as evidence of the long Turkish occupancy of Thessaly. These minarets are a conspicuous and most graceful and attractive feature in every landscape where they occur. Many minarets have been demolished since the Greek occupation in 1886, and I am told that the city was far more picturesque before that date.

We found Larissa like a city of the dead. All the houses were deserted, most were carefully locked and barred up, with the shutters down. Some had been broken into, and we could see the interiors in a state of desolate confusion. One quarter of the town, that on the north-eastern side, had been utterly pillaged and wrecked. All this evil work had been done by the Greek prisoners and irregulars on the day

and night before. These *mauvais sujets* had maltreated their own countrymen and women, and had plundered all they could lay their hands upon.

The station at Larissa was a scene of wild confusion. Hither the panic-stricken population had crowded in thousands on the fatal Saturday when the mob of flying Greek troops poured through the town. The station itself and the open space around it were strewn with the wreck of innumerable trunks, bags, boxes, baskets, and every kind of baggage. The wretched people of Larissa had carried hither all their portable luggage, but the authorities had allowed none to be taken into the over-crowded trains. Accordingly it had all to be left behind, and was plundered by the released prisoners and the general scum of the retiring army, that joined with them in the pillage of Larissa. The *débris* was strewn about the station in every phase of disorder. There was a large trunk bearing Mrs. Ormiston Chant's name in big letters. One of the correspondents gleefully photographed this memento of so interesting a lady.

Larissa bore every evidence of the panic flight of the Greeks. Not only was one quarter



of it looted bare, but houses in other parts had been broken into. The barracks were partly burnt; the Greek wounded in the hospitals had been abandoned by the doctors and attendants. Ten big siege guns were found intact in the citadel, and over 5000 Gras rifles, with a large amount of ammunition, were also captured by the victorious Turks.

Edhem Pasha, as I have already said, took every possible measure to prevent his own troops from following the lamentable example of the Greeks. The Albanians, always turbulent and undisciplined, did try a little plundering on the first night, but they were immediately checked by the Headquarters Staff. Several of the Arnauts were flogged, and two were sentenced to be shot, but this extreme penalty was not exacted.

Every European in Larissa at the time can give evidence of or can bear witness to the great and most laudable efforts of the Mushir and his staff to maintain the highest discipline. Edhem and his officers certainly succeeded in restraining all pillage and violence towards the civil population while I was in Thessaly. There were, for instance, several rich villages along Lake Karla, full of cattle, sheep, and poultry of all kinds.

Later on the Turkish soldiers, who had very little to eat, were close to all this abundance of enviable food, but nothing was touched.

We heard a good many stories about the Crown Prince. There is no doubt His Royal Highness was very ill advised. Probably some officious *aide-de-camp* was more responsible for his hasty and ill-judged retirement than the Crown Prince himself. It must not be forgotten too that in a panic flight all discipline disappears, and that there were many reckless and disaffected men among the Greek soldiers. The Greeks are very like the French in crying out, "*Nous sommes trahis*," even when beaten by their own want of organisation or courage. Mr. Burleigh openly refers to the likelihood of rifles being let off in the direction of the Crown Prince and his staff. The necessity for getting the heir to the throne and Commander-in-Chief clear away from the ruck of the fugitives until some order was restored may explain, though it does not excuse, the way in which the Crown Prince abandoned his army on April 24th.

One of the first trains that left the station early on Saturday morning was seized by his staff. The unfortunate inhabitants who had crowded into it were bundled out. Not only

did the Crown Prince and his staff enter this train, but his horses also were put into horse-boxes and entrained. The whole party then steamed off to Pharsalos *viâ* Valestinos, a round by train of over fifty miles. By road, and it is an easy and direct road, Pharsalos is only twenty-two miles across country—that is a four hours' ride. It would have been consonant with duty as well as dignity had His Royal Highness made some effort to check the panic and re-form the fugitives. At least he and his staff might have ridden with them by road to Pharsalos, where the headquarters were subsequently fixed.

No doubt the panic and discontent among the Greek soldiery explain the conduct of those who advised Prince Constantine. It may have been wise, it was certainly not heroic. The brutal way in which Colonel Manos was treated by his people, after the reverses in Epirus later on, shows of what the Greeks are capable. The universal testimony of eye-witnesses, English and foreign newspaper correspondents, not less than English and Italian volunteers, proves that the Greeks, especially in defeat, are both cowardly, irrational, and cruel.

When the news of the capture of Larissa reached this country, it had a painful effect upon

some English Phil-Hellenes. I cannot refrain from quoting the following delightful extract from a leading article in the *Daily Chronicle* of April 26 :—

The barbarian horde, in numbers, in cavalry, and in all-important artillery, is advancing steadily into Christian territory. Such is to-day's news, though, as we shall explain later, it may not be so bad from a military point of view as from that of humanity and civilisation. Looked at in this latter light, it is the blackest conceivable. The governing Turk, hated of all good men, exposed in his unspeakable infamy as the planner of wholesale murder, the human beast whose very name brings a shudder with it, who was threatened by the Prime Minister of Great Britain with the wrath of God only the other day, to curb whom a United Europe is at this moment supposed to be making plans and schemes of the comprehensive character, is sending his cut-throats gaily on to the destruction of a little Christian people, with two great Christian rulers giving him hardly-veiled support, and one of them sending his officers to fight in the front line. This is the incredible situation to-day. The Moslem barbarian, thrust back by centuries of heroic effort in all parts of the Balkans, has resumed his victorious advance in Europe. The Crescent is driving back the Cross. The sacred symbol of the Christian world no longer means victory. "In this sign thou shalt conquer," said the fiery cross in the legendary heavens of Constantine. "In this sign thou shalt be defeated, be massacred, be tortured, be despoiled," is what the Cross of Christ, as the powers of Europe regard it, means to the Greek of to-day. England is one of those powers, and we Englishmen are partners in the great crime.

We spent a whole week at Larissa and in the surrounding country. Two nights I slept at Gherli, a large village about eight miles from Valestinos. We made various excursions into the plain and mountain valleys around, one to the Vale of Tempe being especially delightful. On this latter we had the company of Mr. Montgomery, the correspondent of the *Standard*, a very able and accurate investigator, and the Bārón Eugene de Binder-Kriegelstein, correspondent of the *Fremdenblatt*. Mr. Montgomery had the advantage of speaking Turkish fluently and Greek sufficiently to be understood. He could therefore converse with the Ottoman soldiers and with the Greek peasants—an immense advantage for any traveller, but especially for a correspondent. Mr. Montgomery showed much courage in his expeditions, and was eventually taken prisoner by the Greeks and very roughly handled. He was at first regarded with much suspicion by the Turks, because he had been born in Asia Minor and spoke Turkish with what was called an Armenian accent, though it was in reality old Anatolian. I was able to disabuse the minds of the Mushir and his staff of their mistaken impression, which had been communicated from Constantinople.

The Baron Binder-Kriegelstein was a remarkable and very amusing man, the *beau idéal* of a free lance, light-hearted, active, and daring to a fault. He was always in the front, and always in danger if possible. In Crete Baron Binder-Kriegelstein was twice taken prisoner by the Christian insurgents, and was once within an ace of being shot. He made his way to the front in Thessaly with a very poor equipment, being without horse, saddle, or arms. The German correspondents are not, as a rule, well paid, and look with wondering envy at the comforts and luxury of their English colleagues. But the Baron Binder was always good-natured, hopeful, and happy. He managed to see a good deal of the later stages of the campaign, and he ended by being captured by the Greeks along with Mr. Montgomery near Halmyros.

The ride to the Vale of Tempe was a very long and hot one. We had Raouf Bey and four troopers with us. Tempe was at that time well outside the Turkish outposts, and only once before during the campaign had the fez been seen within this picturesque and lovely defile. The ubiquitous Seifulah Bey had ridden through as far as Tsaghesi and back again. On our way

we met several Greek peasants hurrying towards Larissa. They had come from the highlands beyond Témpé and near Nezeros, and complained that the "Vlaks" (Wallachs) and the "Ghegs" (Arnauts) had descended upon their villages and were plundering them of their clothes and cattle. No personal violence had been offered, but the raiders seized any desirable article of clothing that took their fancy.

There do not seem to have been any Wallachs among the raiders, but there was a band of wandering Albanians that had left the army and gone off to do a little looting on its own account. These peasants were going to ask Edhem Pasha to send them a guard of Turkish soldiers. At Baba, a large village lying just at the entrance to the Vale, we found only male inhabitants. They came out to meet us, headed by the priest, and greeted us. They made formal submission, thinking we were Turkish officials, and asked for protection. No violence or pillage had been done to them, but they were terrified at the reports of the raiding of the Arnauts, and had sent their women and children up to the rocky town of Ambelakia, perched 1000 feet above on the slopes of Ossa. The

Arnauts had been heard of on the north bank of the river not many miles away. That night we saw Edhem Pasha and told him of our experience; but we found that the Mushir had already despatched a company of regular soldiers in response to the prayer of the Greek villagers. These soldiers were in occupation of the valley on our next visit, a week later, and the people were well satisfied with their behaviour. We rode through the beautiful valley till it opened out in a succession of exquisite meadows, but did not quite reach the bridge over the Pencius, as it was getting late. So the fact that it was broken was not discovered. The return journey from the foot of the vale to Larissa took us seven hours. We did not get home till midnight, both horses and riders very fatigued.

According to Mr. Clive Bigham, the correspondent of the *Times*, who was a favourite with the Turkish Headquarters Staff, and often received very special information, the Turkish losses up to April 25th—that is up to the capture of Larissa—were only 400. Mr. Bigham estimates the Greek casualties at about the same number. This seems incredibly low, if by 400 is meant not killed, but killed



and wounded together.\* That all the keenly-contested and bloody combats along fifty miles of frontier, including Melouna, Kritiri, Raveni, and Deliler, should only have cost the Turks 400 men *hors de combat* seems grotesque, and must throw doubt on the vivid descriptions of desperate fighting which were telegraphed home from both sides. I should be disposed to place the losses in the first period of the war at nearly 2000, with some 500 killed on each side.

According also to the same authority, Edhem Pasha issued orders on April 25th, when he knew of the capture of Larissa, for a fresh disposition of his forces. Hairi Pasha with the First Division was to advance on Zarkos, which is south-west of Larissa and midway to Trikkala. Neschat Pasha with the Second Division was to move forward on Hairi's left flank. Memdouk Pasha with the Third Division was to occupy Larissa. The Fifth and Sixth Divisions, under Hakki and Hamdi Pasha, were to move round to the left of Larissa and bivouac some five miles south of the town. Haidar with the Fourth Division, which had done most of the fighting at Melouna, was to remain in and around that Pass. The Cavalry division was to bivouac in the plain

to the south, along a wide front and in advance of the Fifth and Sixth Divisions.

The one step that ought to have been taken—a rapid advance in force upon Valestinos, the most important position on the new Greek line—was not taken. Here the railway lines from Volo, Pharsalos and Larissa join. Once Valestinos was taken, Volo would be almost indefensible, and Pharsalos absolutely so. A rapid and powerful move upon Valestinos would have probably resulted in the Turks getting hold, with barely a struggle, of this most important coign of vantage. Ten days later it cost Edhem many hundred brave men to drive Smolenski out of Valestinos. I ventured to urge Edhem Pasha to press forward with his left wing upon Valestinos and Volo. The Mushir did not disagree with the idea; but he had a plan for enticing the Greeks down to fight a pitched battle on the level plain by appearing timid and not advancing too rapidly. Needless to say, this scheme was entirely futile. The Greeks were wanting in courage and in generalship, but they had plenty of cunning. The last thing they were likely to do was to leave their fastnesses and entrenchments and give Edhem a chance of utterly smashing them in the open.

The idea of Edhem, with his 90,000 splendid Ottomans, hoping by inaction to entice the Greeks, who had enjoyed a full taste of their quality, down into the Thessalian plain was very droll. It pleased Ellis' fancy immensely. When the Marshal one night explained it to us and to two of the correspondents with an amount of gesture and facial play very unusual in the dignified and impassive Mushir, it was difficult to restrain a smile. It was possible that Edhem Pasha did not really mean the reason he gave for delay; but that, having some other and graver cause for inaction—possibly a lack of ammunition—he gave us the first excuse that occurred to him. Edhem was always so perfectly courteous and self-restrained, that I believe he would rather give any excuse than decline to give an answer.

And here let me say that it would be difficult to imagine or construct a more perfect gentleman than Edhem Pasha. He is quite the best type of Osmanli, dignified, kind-hearted, reserved, and upright, with at the same time a keen sense of humour. Every one liked and admired Edhem. He is a man in whose promise you could implicitly trust, and who would resent any imputation upon his honour as a stain. He was an

indefatigable worker, and seemed hardly ever to go to bed. I have seen him at all hours of the day and night, as late as 2 A.M. and as early as five. Once only did I find Edhem engaged, and then his *aide-de-camp* told me apologetically—that it was a very hot afternoon—that he had persuaded the Marshal to take a few minutes' repose. Not for worlds would I have disturbed the hard-working and sweet-tempered soldier. On the night of Naim's rather serious repulse before Valestinos, Mr. Montgomery and Ellis outstripped the courier, and took him, the Marshal, news of the action and its result at 1 A.M. Edhem Pasha received them at once most cordially, and spent a half hour over the map, hearing from them every detail of the day's fighting. Before the sun was up, a whole division, some 12,000 men, was on its way to reinforce Naim's shattered brigade.

The only occasion on which I saw Edhem at all excited was when he told me of the protest that the ambassadors, headed by Sir Philip Currie, had made to the Porte against the alleged atrocities committed by his soldiers in Thessaly. Even then he was more indignant than angry. It was the wrath of a good man at a gross injustice. The conduct of the Ottoman

army had been so good that every Englishman present with the Turkish troops felt as indignant as Edhem at this false charge. We immediately got together and despatched to Sir Philip Currie a telegram, of which the following is a verbatim copy. It had to be sent in French because the telegraph clerks would and could only transmit messages in French or Turkish.

À SON EXCELLENCE L'AMBASSADEUR DE LA GRANDE  
BRETAGNE, CONSTANTINOPLE.

« Nous pouvons donner evidence personnelle sur la conduite admirable des soldats Ottomans et aussi sur les efforts constants et pleins de succès des officiers Turcs d'empêcher toute pillage et de protéger de toute manière les habitants Chrétiens. Déjà les Grecs retournent ici en grande nombre et se déclarent très satisfaits de leur traitement. Dans les villages environnants les habitants Grecs ont envoyés demander la protection des troupes Turcs.

Dans Larrisse, après le départ des autorités militaires Grecs, le Gouverneur Grec a laissé sortir tous les prisonniers et leur a donnés des fusils. Ces gens avec des autres mauvais sujets ont fait beaucoup de mal et de pillage à Larrisse, pendant les vingt-quatre heures avant l'arrivée des Turcs. Ici les habitants Grecs, avec les Prêtres, affirment la verité de ce fait.

Un seul village Grec, dans ce pays, Deliler, a été en parti brûlé, et cela à cause du combat acharné de Vendredi dans le village. Plusieurs maisons ont été détruites par ci par là, où on a tiré contre les soldats Ottomans. Mais la discipline et la conduite de l'Armée Turc ont été admirable

et peuvent être comparées très favorablement avec celles des meilleures troupes du monde. Tous les Européens avec l'armée sont de cette opinion.

E. ASHMEAD BARTLETT,  
Membre du Parlement.

CLIVE BIGHAM,  
Correspondant du *Times*.

GEO. R. MONTGOMERY,  
Correspondant du *Standard*.

W. PEEL,  
Correspondant special du *Daily Telegraph*.

H. A. GWYNNE,  
Correspondant spécial de l'agence Reuter.

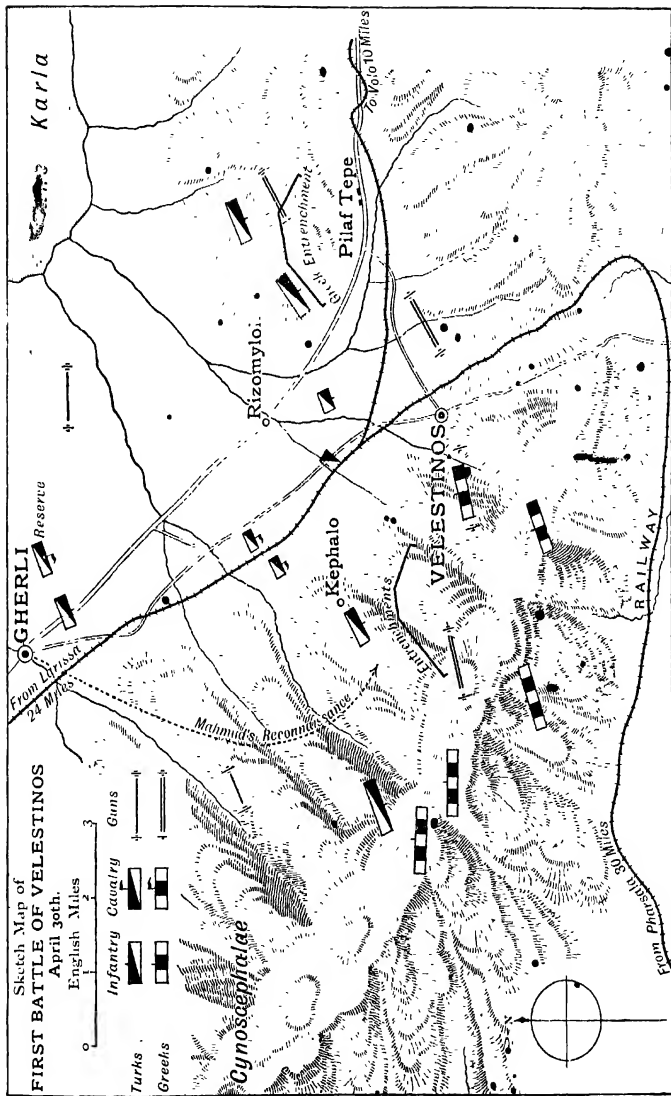
G. W. STEEVENS,  
Correspondant du *Daily Mail*.

HAMILTON WELDON, ~  
Correspondant spécial du *Morning Post*.

## CHAPTER IX.

## FIRST BATTLE OF VALESTINOS.

WE wished on several occasions to ride to Pharsalos, as there were reports that the Greeks had evacuated that position, but the Marshal begged us not to go, as the country was not clear of the enemy. He promised me most clearly that we should be warned the moment there was a chance of an action. By great good fortune I decided on Thursday, April 29th, to ride down the railway line towards Valestinos early the next morning. This enabled us to see the first battle of Valestinos, which, though on a small scale, was one of the most desperate and bloody engagements of the war. It was not intended by the Commander-in-chief to be a battle at all; but merely a reconnaissance in force. Owing, however, to the impetuous foolhardiness of Mahmoud Bey, and partly owing to the obstinacy either of Hakki Pasha, the commander of the 3rd Division, or of Naim Pasha, the Brigadier in actual command, the reconnaissance soon de-







veloped into a formidable attack of all arms. It was pushed home with the utmost courage and tenacity, and it ended in a sanguinary repulse. The Turks had at the outside one brigade of infantry, and the cavalry division of about 1000 sabres engaged.

Mr. Burleigh, who was with Smolenski, makes a curious mistake in estimating the Turkish force at 40,000 men, and in placing Edhem and Osman Pashas in command. Edhem was not at Gherli that day, or near there, and Osman did not go beyond Salonica. Probably Mr. Burleigh has mixed up this first battle of Valestinos on April 30th with the second battle on May 5th, when the Turks brought from 17,000 to 18,000 men into line. We were all over the field, and saw every battalion engaged, both during the action and after the retreat at night to Gherli. There were certainly not more than 6000 Turks engaged in, or available for, the action. The first reinforcements, despatched in the small hours from near Larissa, did not reach Gherli till about 8 A.M. on Saturday; and it was past midday before the whole fresh division was encamped in and around that village.

It is twenty-one miles from Larissa to Gherli, and eight miles on from Gherli to Valestinos by

Rizomylou. The Greeks occupied a very strong position, for they were entrenched along the low ridge of hills that lies between the precipitous heights of Pelion (Pilaf Tépé) on their right, and Cynoscephalæ on their left. The shoulder of Pelion, which is known as Pilaf Tépé, is exceedingly steep and rocky, and rises some 2000 feet above the plain. The hills run north-eastwards from Cynoscephalæ in a series of ridges that get lower towards the centre. From these ridges smaller slopes run transversely, that is northwards, into the plain. The Greeks had entrenchments along several of these transverse ridges as well as along the central line. In the depression between two of them, and two miles north-west of Valestinos, lay the village of Kephalo, which the Turks captured on the 29th and held tenaciously until the evening of the 30th. There was a small round hill near the centre of the Greek position, on which they had entrenchments and a very active battery. The railway line from Larissa to Volo runs through Valestinos. There one branch turns due eastwards to Volo (ten miles), and the other bends round south-westwards to Pharsalos. Valestinos itself is picturesquely placed at the foot of the hills, and abounds with trees. Just

opposite Valestinos, and to the north, lies the fair-sized village of Rizomylou. This was the Turkish headquarters at the first battle of Valestinos on April 30th, and was six miles south-east of Gherli, and about three and a half miles north of Valestinos. In front, and to the right of Rizomylou, there extended a thick and umbrageous wood for at least two miles towards Valestinos and the Greek position. The wood varied in width from 200 to 800 yards. It would have been splendid cover to the Turks for an advance, but in neither battle did they use it. There were Greek entrenchments in the wood; and its southern end was full of Greeks on the 30th, as we discovered later, and nearly to our cost.

The combat began on Monday, April 29th, when Mahmoud Bey, a son of the famous Ghazi Mukhtar, undertook a reconnaissance in the direction of Valestinos. Mahmoud had two battalions of Hakki Pasha's division, a battery of artillery, and six of the ten available squadrons of the cavalry division, amounting to about 600 sabres. His idea was to turn the Greek left by advancing along the heights of Cynoscephalæ on the south-west of Valestinos, and so come down upon that important railway junction from the flank and

rear. But Mahmoud seriously miscalculated the strength of Colonel Smolenski's force, which Mr. Burleigh, who was with the Greeks at Valestinos, puts at 10,000, and which I estimated on the field to be at least 12,000. There is no doubt that Smolenski received reinforcements on Friday, for we saw the trains steaming into the station, and shortly afterwards the Greeks took the offensive with 'great vigour.'

There was but little fighting on the 29th. Mahmoud Bey with his two battalions advanced from Gherli south-eastwards towards Valestinos, and got within about two miles of that town on its west. The infantry moved along the ridges of Cynoscephalæ, trying to outflank the Greeks at Valestinos; the cavalry explored the level ground below, which was thick with waving corn, and the artillery had a little duel with the Greek guns. Mahmoud asked for reinforcements, and an extra battalion was sent to him by Hakki Pashi.

The next morning the battle recommenced at an early hour. The Turks took the village of Kephalo. Mahmoud Bey then committed an act of extraordinary foolhardiness, which cost the cavalry severely, and which materially contributed to the reverse of the day. He ordered

the Turkish cavalry to charge a Greek entrenchment on the centre hill, held by infantry. The order was obeyed with great gallantry. The cavalry rode boldly at the Greek entrenchment, in spite of a heavy fire. Mahmoud himself led. They actually captured one entrenchment, and a Greek officer, who bravely held his ground and fired his revolver with much effect, was cut down by Mahmoud. A second and more formidable entrenchment now confronted the Turkish horse. They suffered from a heavy flanking fire, and were obliged to retire, with the loss of fifty men and nearly half their horses disabled.

The special correspondent of the *Standard* with the Greeks thus described this charge :—

About half-past ten some fifteen hundred Circassian horse attempted to dislodge the Greek battery, which had been doing terrible execution among the Turkish infantry, who were attacking the village of Velestino. The charge was a reckless and foolhardy one, but a brilliant and not-to-be-forgotten sight as the horsemen swept up the slope towards our guns, the long line of glittering sabres flashing in the sunlight.

As they approached the battery puffs of smoke spurted up from the ground in their immediate front, from the Greek infantry lying *perdu* in front of the guns, and a hail of bullets sped into the mass of advancing cavalry. The horses reared and plunged as their riders pulled them up in

dismay, when a brisk fire from infantry hurrying up from the outskirts of the village of Velestino on their left flank immediately decided the course these gallant and reckless horsemen must pursue. They whirled round, and, spreading out fan-shape right and left as they rode, hurriedly retreated from the spur to the position on the plain they had occupied before the charge, the Greek guns harassing their retreat with considerable effect.

A loud cheer burst out from the Greek infantry and gunners as the horsemen scattered across the valley. General Smolenski and his Staff, who had been watching the reckless charge, could not restrain their delight, and joined in the cheer of their men, and the General exclaimed with intense emotion that probably henceforth his soldiers would not regard the terrible Circassian cavalry as such a bogey as they had hitherto imagined them to be. The Greek officers had the greatest difficulty in preventing their men from following up the retreat of the horsemen. Directly the Circassians drew off, the Greek General telegraphed the success of the gallant defence of the Greek battery to the Crown Prince at Pharsala, and received a reply congratulating the troops shortly after twelve o'clock.

There was great indignation at headquarters at this escapade of Mahmoud, which incapacitated the best part of Edhem's very meagre cavalry division for action. It has been asserted that it was by Mahmoud's orders that Neschat's brigade made the rash assault at Domokos, which cost them 25 per cent. of their number *hors de combat*. . If this be true, then this young

*aide-de-camp* of the Sultan is responsible for a heavy and needless loss to the army in Thessaly—at least 1500 men.

The retreat of the Turkish cavalry was covered by the infantry in and around Kephalo, upon whom the Greeks now pressed forward in great numbers and with loud shouts. A tremendous succession of fusillades were fired by the elated Greeks with little effect. Meanwhile, on the Turkish left, Hakki Pasha had sent forward four battalions and two batteries under Naim Pasha—one of the Brigadiers—to occupy Rizomylou, and to press back the Greeks on the far left. These were in force and entrenched at the foot of Pilaf Tepé, and in the fields that sloped upwards to Valestinos and to the low ridges on the left of that town. We found the flat-topped belfry tower of Rizomylou Church, some sixty feet high, an excellent coign of vantage from which to watch the fight; there we spent the last four hours of Friday's battle. Naim himself was on the flat ground, midway between Pilaf Tepé and Rizomylou. He had with him two batteries of artillery, which did little during the 30th, and two squadrons of cavalry that moved about in the cornfields between Rizomylou and the middle of the wood. . Part of two



infantry battalions were in and in front of Rizomylou; part were advancing through the wood. Two more were clearing out the Greek entrenchments at the foot of Pelion. Later on these tried to storm the slopes of Pilaf Tepé—an exploit almost as difficult and reckless as Mahmoud's cavalry charge.

About noon we rode up to Naim Pasha, the brigadier, and found him watching with equanimity the progress of the battle that was raging furiously both on the left and the far right. There seemed to be no connection between the two separate engagements that were then at their height—the one at the foot of Pelion, a mile and a half to the south-east; the other around Kephalo, two and a half miles to the south-west. There was nothing doing in the Turkish centre, which at that time only extended about half a mile south of Rizomylou. Naim Pasha is a small and inconspicuous officer of about fifty years of age, sunburnt and grizzled, with the air of a man that has risen from the ranks. He received us with politeness, but as neither he nor any of his staff could speak anything but Turkish, our conversation was very limited. Naim had no field-glasses and borrowed mine, with which he inspected carefully and for some

time the progress of the two conflicts on his right and left. He soon sent off an orderly towards Pilaf Tepé, and we saw the result shortly afterwards. The two battalions on the left front began swarming up the steep hill-sides like ants, under a terrific fire from the Greeks, who had a series of entrenchments on the slopes.

The heat was awful. I have never known a hotter sun than that of April 30th. The sufferings of the wounded soldiers on the bare and exposed slopes of Pilaf Tepé must have been terrible. I could hardly endure the fierce blaze of mid-day, and tried to get shelter under an artillery wagon. This was not very successful. There were three gunners there as well; so I came out and got Mr. Montgomery to ask Naim Pasha if we might ride across and take shelter in the delicious-looking green wood that stretched forward on our right in the most inviting way. At first Naim seemed to object, but ultimately he consented. So we rode towards the wood — Mr. Montgomery, Ellis, myself, and four troopers. Raouf Bey, our lieutenant, stayed behind with the rest of the escort. We passed the two squadrons of cavalry that were quiescent in the cornfields, and also left on our right some infantry that

were slowly picking their way forward. On reaching the wood, I threw myself from my horse, almost *hors de combat*, and revelled in the shade of a splendid beech-tree. Mr. Montgomery and Ellis wished to ride on through the wood and explore the country on the other side. I rather thoughtlessly let them go, and sent two troopers with them. They went off gleefully, for both rejoiced in adventure, and I went to sleep. After an hour I was awakened by firing all around me, and on looking up, found the Turkish skirmishers crouching behind trees along the line of wood just in front of me, and firing at an invisible enemy beyond. I was then greatly alarmed for my own party, who had ridden off in the direction towards which the Turks were firing. I was just mounting to ride through the wood after them, when they re-appeared, to my great relief, about half way down the wood towards Rizomylou, and soon rode up safe and sound. They had seen Greek entrenchments in their passage through the wood, but no Greeks.

There were plenty of Greeks lying *perdu* about the south-western fringe of the wood; but fortunately these, being some distance from their main body in front of Kephalo, did not wish,

by firing, to attract notice to their presence. So my small party escaped unpleasant attention. They rode on towards Kephalo for about a mile, and then prudently turned northwards and came back across a safer part of the wood.

We soon found our position in the wood rather warm, being in the first line of Turkish skirmishers. As in addition we were all very hungry, having left Elia and our luncheon behind in the Rizomylou belfry, we decided to return thither for food. On our return we passed through the supporting lines of Turkish infantry advancing to the wood, where a brisk fusillade was proceeding. The two squadrons of cavalry were also moving gently towards the trees, probably to get shelter from the Greek battery on the round hill opposite, which was just beginning to pay Naim Pasha and his staff the attention of a few shells. We found three correspondents in the belfry—Mr. Peel, Mr. Gwynne, and Mr. Steevens—and they stayed with us till 5.30 watching the fight. It went on without much change till four o'clock, the sound of tremendous volleys of musketry rolling down from Pelion, and, less in noise though not in quantity, also from Kephalo. The Greeks in the entrenchments in front of Kephalo must have

fired an incredible number of cartridges, for they kept blazing away, volley after volley, at impossible distances. On Pilaf Tepé the firing was also very heavy and much more deadly, for the opposing forces were at close quarters.

Heré—that is on the Volo side—the attack was made up the steep and rocky face of a hill at least 2000 feet in height. It was a difficult feat to scale such a hill at all, but in the face of heavy fire from breastworks at the top it was impossible. Probably no troops in the world but Turks would have undertaken it. Naim's two battalions, however, forced their way with indomitable courage up the precipitous ridge from rock to rock, but with heavy loss, until they reached the summit. There all cover failed them. Further advance became impossible, but tremendous firing went on from 12 to 6. At 4.30 o'clock the Greeks, being largely reinforced, made desperate attempts to drive the Turks back on all sides, and especially from Pilaf Tepé. The volleys of rifle firing were constant and overpowering.

The Greeks were evidently making a counter attack. They had fresh troops and were pushing the Turks very hard. We could see the Greek skirmishers springing over the entrenchments,

running down the reverse slope and up the opposite side on to the next ridge. Others swarmed down the little depressions between the transverse ridges, and made for the wood. The main body fired volley after volley in the direction of Suleiman's squadrons, which must have been over 5000 yards away; and also against the Turkish infantry in Kephalo.

On Pilaf Tepé the firing was equally furious and far more murderous. A perpetual succession of fusillades, a roll of fire that crackled and volleyed, struck the ear, while we could see the Greeks rushing along and down from the higher crests towards the edge of the summit, where the Turks were lying down behind rocks and stones and replying with deliberation to the tremendous volleys with which they were being drenched. It was clear that the Turkish force was far too small for the immense task it had undertaken. To storm the slopes of Cynoscephalæ and the rocky heights of Pelion with six weak battalions was a feat that Hercules could not have accomplished.

The Greeks shelled the village of Rizomylou about 5 o'clock, and pitched two shells well among the Turkish baggage, mules and gun-carriages. These were close to the church tower,

where we had an excellent position for view. Naim Pasha did not reply, for the Greek guns were 3600 'yards away, half behind the trees, and no particular harm was done. About 6 o'clock the Turks began to draw in their outlying skirmishers and to concentrate round the village. Bodies of infantry and a few cavalry, which had been invisible on the far left round outlying spurs of the hills, began to appear and to move towards Rizomylou.

When we left, at 6.30, the Turks were retiring, though with most dignified and cool deliberation. They had suffered terribly from the heat, and they were short of ammunition. It was not till close on seven o'clock that the Turkish infantry had fallen back from Pilaf Tepé and Kephalo, and were retiring through Rizomylou deliberately and without any close pursuit upon Gherli.

It has been a puzzle to me what became of the Turkish wounded after this first battle of Valestinos. I saw very few, though there must have been a large number. On the Kephalo side they were probably taken off by their own people; but on the steep slopes of Pilaf Tepé removal was all but impossible, yet here there must have been several hundred wounded Turks.

I cannot find any evidence that the Greeks captured and tended these wounded. What then became of them? We saw a painful sight the next day which arouses suspicions.

We wished to stay to the very end, but Mr. Gwynne pointed out that the regular Turkish troops were evacuating the village and retiring to Gherli, and that only a battalion of Arnauts remained. The discipline of these mountaineers, who have many good qualities, is not their strong point, and if they had taken a fancy to our horses, we might have shared the fate of the English correspondents with the Greek army during the flight from Larissa. The Greek soldiers appropriated their horses and even carriages without the slightest scruple. •

However, there was no panic among the retreating Turks. They fell back in the most leisurely and nonchalant way, as if they had been out for a little recreation instead of waging a bloody combat all the livelong day. The Greeks, who had fought well enough so long as they were well within their strong entrenchments, knew better than to risk a fight in the open, when they would be the assailants. But for the superb quality of the Turkish soldier, especially when on the defensive, Smolenski ought to have



pushed home his attack that evening, and have captured or destroyed the whole of Naim's brigade. There were no Turkish supports available within twenty miles; Smolenski had more than double Naim's force; his troops had lost but slightly, and were flushed with their success. The Turks, though by no means disheartened, had lost heavily, and were very tired and hungry. Still Smolenski was probably right. With his troops it would have been very risky to attack the Turkish infantry in the open, and a severe repulse would have been disastrous. Had Smolenski possessed well-disciplined and courageous troops, Naim must have been annihilated.

The following is taken from a letter by the correspondent of the *Daily News* with the Greeks, in that paper of May 4th:—

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My estimate of the Greek losses in yesterday's battle is as follows: The killed numbered fourteen, including one officer and one sergeant, while one hundred and forty-two men were wounded. These losses were due mainly to the Turkish infantry fire, and very few to the Turkish shells, most of which did not fall within the Greek lines, and of those that did few exploded.

As the enemy during the night retreated out of sight towards Larissa, I was able to-day to ride over yesterday's battlefield. The attempt to outflank our right must have proved disastrous, owing to the murderous musketry fire

poured down from the slopes held by our infantry and Evzones. The long line of wheat-fields was strewn with corpses, many of which were clad in portions of Greek army uniforms, presumably from the depôts abandoned at Larissa.

The Turkish cavalry charge upon the Greek left above Velestino seemed an act of sheer madness, as I viewed from below the long steep incline which the Turkish horsemen attempted to ascend in the face of two entrenchments of infantry, some two hundred rifles in all. The Greeks speak with emotion of the gallantry of the enemy at this point. Yet very few of these horsemen succeeded in approaching within two hundred yards of the nearest Greek lines, and further down, on more level ground, the green wheat-fields were dotted with fallen men and horses.

Yesterday the Greek headquarters at Pharsala could have sent one fresh regiment across to cut off the Turkish retreat in the direction of Gherli, and the entire force which participated in yesterday's attack could have been annihilated or captured. But Colonel Smolenski's men were too tired, after two days and nights in the trenches, and also too few, to attempt a serious flank movement.

I was so utterly weary on reaching Gherli that I decided to sleep there rather than ride back, twenty-one miles, to Larissa. Ellis and Mr. Montgomery, however, went back, as an extra good dinner had been ordered, and they were both ravenous. They were a long time on the road, owing to the darkness of the night and the number of wounded men and baggage animals about. However, they got in before

Naim's courier, and went after midnight to give Edhem Pasha, at the palace, an account of the battle. The Mushir received them in a most friendly way, and despatched large reinforcements at once to Gherli.

Meanwhile I got a bed in the principal Turkish house at Gherli. It was quite a villa, and in charge of a very intelligent and hospitable factor, Hassan Effendi. He entertained me most kindly and generously for two days, and refused to let me pay a sixpence for either room or food. In vain did I beg him to let me defray the charges of the food he gave us. Nothing would move him, and I had difficulty in inducing the servants to accept a little present, and only in his absence. This is the regular practice of the Ottoman race in the country districts. They offer visitors the best they have and refuse all payment.

Suleiman Pasha, who commanded the cavalry, slept in the same house. He is a big and rather coarse man, and speaks no French or English. He spent at least five minutes in washing his hands before dinner, though his head and the rest of his body were covered with dust. Suleiman seemed depressed, and well he might be, for Mahmoud's freak had more than deci-

mated his command. There was also there a very smart young *aide-de-camp* of the Sultan, who had just arrived—a very fine gentleman indeed. He had plenty of saddle-bags, with all the paraphernalia of a European toilet table—a thing rarely seen in the Ottoman army, where luxuries do not abound. There was also a very holy mollah, who seemed to be living at free quarters in the house. He wore the green turban, which denotes that the pilgrimage to Mecca has been achieved by its wearer. The mollah evidently regarded me with some suspicion, and was, I believe, praying either for me or against me much of the time when we were together. I tried to talk with him, but he shook his head hopelessly at my efforts in French, Italian, and German. The Turkish officers took no notice of the mollah; but I got Hassan Effendi to ask him in to supper, which he seemed to enjoy. I have a great respect for the self-denying clergy of all religions, and would have done the same for the Rev. Hugh Price-Hughes, had I met him in a foreign campaign, though I confess to a preference for an Anglican clergyman. There was a charming Turkish officer at supper, an *aide-de-camp* of Hakki Pasha. I much regret not to remember his name, for he was one of

the nicest and most intelligent officers we met in Thessaly.

The supper was simple, but profuse. It consisted of dish after dish of stewed meats and chicken, several of them highly spiced, which were placed in the middle of the table. We all made dives with our forks into the dishes and fished out any bit we fancied or happened to transfix. There were fried eggs to begin and sweets at the finish. Fortunately I had a bottle of rather good red wine with me, of which all, except the holy mollah, partook with gusto.

Mr. Montgomery and Ellis had solemnly promised to change horses and ride or drive back the same night; but they did not re-appear. Again I got very anxious, as there were so many wild people about the roads during the night. At 6 o'clock A.M. I mounted and rode back towards Larissa. Crowds of soldiers were coming along the road towards Gherli, and it was evident that Edhem Pasha did not mean to have any more reverses before Valestinos. I asked the colonels commanding the different battalions if they had seen my party, but it was not till I met Hakki Pasha, about ten miles from Gherli, that I heard any news of them. He had seen Ellis the night before close to Larissa. I went on, and some

four miles further met Mr. Montgomery and Ellis leisurely riding towards Gherli. They were not in the least grateful for my alarms. They had seen Edhem Pasha, had enjoyed an excellent dinner, forgotten their promise, and gone to bed. I made a vow never to be anxious again.

We then all rode back to Gherli, and after a short rest rode round the Turkish pickets, which girdled Gherli on the east, south-east and south. They were well placed, and were all on the *qui vive*. When we came to our old friends, the Prizrend battalion of Arnauts, they crowded round us, offering all sorts of military loot for sale—Greek saddlebags, Gras rifles, pistols, sabres and cartouche belts. These they had picked up on the battlefield. They knew Ellis to be a collector of arms. He bought a good number of mementoes of this kind, but most were afterwards illegally confiscated by our Greek captors, when we were on our way home.

Then we paid Hakki Pasha a visit at the Gherli Station, where he was quartered. He is a quiet, bright-eyed, amiable little man, very kind and hospitable. He gave us coffee, and insisted upon his military surgeon rebandaging Ellis' head there and then. They call all their military surgeons "Doctor." The next day

Hakki Pasha offered me his carriage to take us back to Larissa, as my horse had given out. His carriage turned out to be an ordinary four-wheeled wagon without springs, like a rather superior forage wagon; but his kindness was none the less. A correspondent gave me a seat in his carriage just as we were starting, and so I did not put Hakki's carriage to the test.

The next morning we accompanied a Turkish reconnaissance towards Rizomylou and Valestinios. Two battalions were sent—one the Prizrend battalion of Arnauts, the other of Turkish regulars. These advanced in skirmishing order across a wide front, extending from the railway line that skirts the hills on the south nearly to the Lake of Karla on the north. A small party of horsemen rode ahead—six troopers under a captain and a non-commissioned officer. We went with the horsemen nearly into Rizomylou.

They rode forward warily, stopping every few minutes to examine any suspicious-looking positions that might conceal the enemy. One village on our left, near the lake, seemed to contain a number of men that looked like Greek irregulars. Two of the troopers were detached to examine the village, which had a rough wall

on the near side, and a churchyard with a high enclosure just on the left. These Greek churchyard enclosures are very general, and offer excellent protection to riflemen. It was an anxious moment as the troopers rode steadily forward—the one going straight for the opening in the village wall, the other skirting round the village to the right. At any moment we expected to see flashes dart forth from the village upon the adventurous troopers. But no shots came. The Greeks turned out to be simple shepherds, and we continued our advance right into Rizomylou, the Arnauts leading.

The cavalry had gone off to ride through the cornfields that skirted the right of the wood, which I have already described. They were soon in full chase of something. The object of their pursuit, however, turned out to be a Greek peasant, who was lurking in the long corn, very likely a scout in plain clothes, but nothing was done to him.

Several of the villages near Gherli had been plundered by the Greek irregulars. Mr. Montgomery, of the *Standard*, gave the following account in that paper of May 6th :—

At seven this morning I rode with a cavalry reconnaissance across the plain. We found the Greek village of



Hadjimisi had been deserted by its inhabitants, because yesterday afternoon fifty 'Greeks descended from the mountains and carried off fifty cattle, the property of the Greek villagers. The plundering carried on by the Greeks in their flight from Turnavo, and which has gone on since, has caused a widespread fury among the peasants of the plain, who find that they are vastly worse treated by their compatriots than by the Turks.

I saw the same thing at Tsurmakli, a village containing about a hundred houses. The road passes over a plain deep in hay, but without hands to gather in the harvest, which has been ready for mowing for the past fortnight. The village is five kilometres south of the Division of Hamdi Pasha, and when I visited it had not been entered by the Turkish troops. Not an inhabitant remained there ; a number of chickens and five howling dogs, and a number of pigs were the sole living creatures ; the pigs had taken up their abode in the empty houses.

The prisoners released from the gaol at Larissa had passed through Tsurmakli and broken open and pillaged every house in the village. Numbers of empty Greek cartridge cases lay in the road and round the houses, seeming to indicate that a little battle had taken place between the brigands and the villagers, before the former made themselves masters of the place. There were, however, no dead bodies, or marks of bloodshed to be seen, and possibly the firing had been simply a *feu de joie* on the part of the escaped prisoners.

As we rode into Rizomylou a ghastly spectacle met our view. The remains of a Turkish soldier, horribly burnt and charred, lay in a small country cart or araba, which was also for

the most part burnt. The fire had been kindled under the araba, and both the cart and its human freight had been almost consumed by the flames. The legs of the soldier below the knees were intact, and it was from his trousers and shoes, as well as from a portion of his tunic, that the victim could be identified as an Ottoman soldier. He had been wounded in the knee and possibly elsewhere. It was not within our power to prove that the fire had been kindled while the unhappy man was alive; but there seems every likelihood that this was the case. The Greek papers had been full of shameful fictions regarding atrocities alleged to have been committed by the Turks, especially upon the Greek wounded. I expose elsewhere the false story that was widely believed of the Greek wounded having been burnt alive in the church at Rizomylou on Friday, the 30th. This was wholly untrue. There were no wounded in the church, and the sacred edifice was standing and uninjured, except that some trifling damage had been done to the interior. The altar had been overturned and some twenty pictures of saints pulled down. It is very likely that this was done by Greek irregulars in order to invent an outrage, for everywhere else the churches were treated by

the Turkish soldiers with great respect. The damage done was very slight, and did not look as if a serious enemy had been at work. The sight of this dead and mutilated soldier greatly infuriated the Turks, especially the Albanians, and many a vow of vengeance was breathed against the cowardly Greeks.

We went back to our old position in the belfry, and watched the development of the reconnaissances with great exactness. On the right, half the Albanian battalion worked their way through the corn-fields into the wood. A desperate outburst of musketry showed that the wood was alive with Greeks. A great battle seemed to be raging amid the leafy cover. An Albanian irregular, who said he belonged to the Prizrend battalion, and whom we met in many different places, came up to see us in the belfry. He was a fine man, with a frank open expression and a magnificent physique. I fancy he was rather fond of loot, like most of his countrymen. To-day, however, he was in a state of terrific excitement at the heavy firing in the wood. He said that his comrades were all being massacred in the wood, and that the Turks had sent them there on purpose. Ellis, who had a poor opinion of Greek shooting, tried to console him by say-

ing that his friends would be all right; but he rushed off and got a hundred or so of his fellow Arnauts together and led them into the wood, where the *feu d'enfer* soon redoubled.

On the left 200 Arnauts advanced rapidly against a Greek entrenchment at the foot of Pilaf Tepé. They ran steadily forward in open order till about eight hundred yards from the Greek trenches. Then there leaped forth from 500 rifles flame and smoke, and some thought the bold Albanians were annihilated. Half of them went down, and the others spread out right and left, and advanced more cautiously. Presently, to our surprise and joy, the Albanians that had apparently fallen got up and continued to move forward with their comrades. They had only gone down to fire at the enemy, and none were hit. So the Arnauts advanced till within 400 to 600 yards of the Greeks. There they lined a little ridge in the field, and began blazing away. Volley after volley was exchanged between the two sides for over an hour. The firing was tremendous. Then the bugle rang out the retire. But the Arnauts would not budge. The bugler was sent half-way out to them with an officer, but their volleys continued.

At last an officer had to go out to the firing

line with the bugler in order to get them to retire. Then they came back sulkily by twos and threes. Mr. Montgomery had a talk with them in Turkish when they reached the village. They were all splendid, dare-devil young men, who treated the whole affair as a first-class joke. The Albanians in the wood also came dropping back in little squads, evidently reluctant to return. We were assured that not a man was killed, and only two or three wounded in the whole reconnaissance. I believe this was so, but it was a perfect marvel, and speaks volumes for the execrable quality of the Greek shooting. We then went down into the churchyard and had our luncheon under the trees, which were fine. It was about three o'clock, and we were in no hurry.

Presently the unusual stillness around struck me as odd. Looking over the high churchyard wall, I saw the last Turkish soldiers just filing slowly out of the north side of the village, while the Greek skirmishers were rapidly coming out of the wood towards Rizomyliou. My orders for a prompt retreat were carried out with alacrity, and we soon caught up the Turkish rear-guard. We all then went slowly back to Gherli, where I had a considerable talk with Hakki Pasha. The

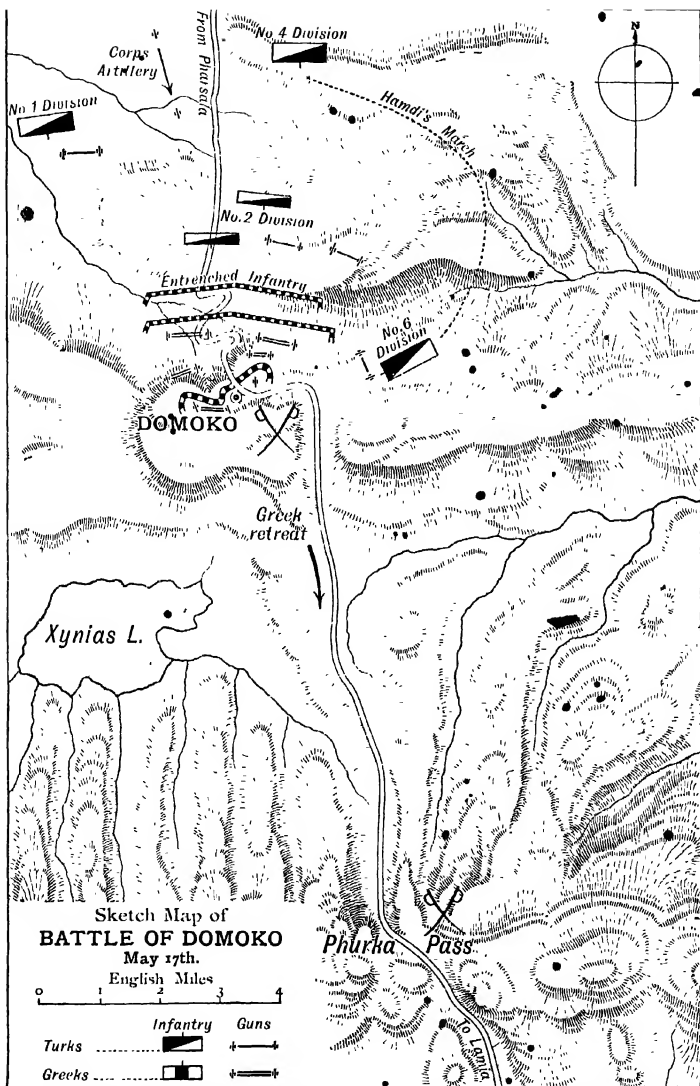
General was very cordial, and told me that there would be no attack in force upon Valestinos for several days. He also, with great consideration, offered me his conveyance. Hakki's prediction was right, for it was not till the following Wednesday, May 5th, that the big and final assault upon Smolenski's position was delivered. My horse was dead beat, and I accepted a seat which a German correspondent kindly offered me in his carriage.

We reached Larissa about eight o'clock, and I had a long talk with the Mushir after dinner that night. It was then that he developed his extraordinary theory about enticing the Greeks down to fight him in the plain by masterly inaction. Edhem Pasha also said there would be no general action before Wednesday. Urgent private affairs called me home, so with the greatest regret we made arrangements to start the next morning for Salonica. I wished to see the Vale of Tempe again, also the coast route by Platamona, Katerina and Kitros. We decided to go that way, instead of by the crowded and war-worn road through Ellassona and Serfidje.

## CHAPTER X.

## VALESTINOS, PHARSALOS, AND DOMOKOS.

THE third and final period of the war begins with the advance upon Pharsalos and Valestinos on May 4th and 5th, and ends with the battle of Domokos, on May 17th and the truce on May 19th. The fighting was on a larger scale and more sanguinary than in the two preceding periods. The Greek positions, certainly those of Valestinos and Domokos, were stronger and well fortified. As the Greeks were driven further in upon their own country, their forces became more concentrated, and a keener feeling of patriotism was aroused. Moreover, their right wing at Valestinos had been much inspired by the success of April 30th, when Smolenski repulsed Naim Pasha's brigade with heavy loss. General Smolenski was a good soldier, and he knew how to choose a strong position, fortify it well, and inspire his men with confidence. I have already described the







despatch of large reinforcements from Larissa to Gherli early on the morning that followed the Turkish reverse, May 1st. Hakki Pasha was further reinforced during the next few days by several battalions of Arnauts; and by the 5th he must have had at least 17,000 men under his command.

The Greek line of defence extended from Volo to Pharsalos by Valestinos, a distance of about thirty miles. This was the line of the railway; and so long as the Greeks held the railway, they had the great advantage of easy and rapid communication and of being able to promptly reinforce any portion of their line that might be threatened. During the battle of

At 30th, we had seen the trains steaming into Valestinos, bringing fresh troops from Pharsalos. Edhem Pasha determined on this occasion to attack upon Pharsalos; and it would enable the Turks to succeed of the other position, if the Greeks held the flat out. Accordingly he advanced to the hills, the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th, from Larissa close up to Pharsalos, while the 1st division moved from Trikkala to Karditsa. The 1st division, just mobilised, moved south of

Elassona, and a large force advanced from Diskata, in the hills 20 miles west of Elassona, towards Trikkala and Pharsalos.

According to Mr. Bigham, Hakki Pasha at Gherli was promised by the Mushir the support of the 3rd Division under Memdouk Pasha for his main attack, and the co-operation of Hamdi Pasha with the 6th Division on his extreme right. The Greek position at Valestinos was by nature immensely strong, and General Smolenski had done his best to strengthen its natural advantages by art. It stretched from the hill of Cynoscephalæ on the left to the steep rocks of Pilaf Tepé on the right, a distance of about six miles. Smolenski had entrenched his 15,000 men up to their necks, and had placed six big guns on Pilaf Tepé. The low hills lying between Pilaf and Cynoscephalæ were covered with made abutments, and from their contour the very defensible series of natural glacis, which were almost insurmountable and could not be taken by assault with few exceptions, but heavy loss. Mr. Bigham gives very few details of this second battle of Valestinos, though it was one of the severest if not actually the most sanguinary and keenly tested of the war.

The Turkish tactics clearly were to wait



assailants. He used the extraordinary phrase, "Our soldiers are swimming in the enemy's blood." The result was that the Turks took two lines of Greek entrenchments, and were within four hundred yards of the third line when the combat ceased on the evening of May 5th.

There were four lines of Greek entrenchments, and the Greeks did not suffer heavy loss on the 5th. The Turks, who were the attacking party, lost a good many, chiefly Albanians. They must have had at least 1200 *hors de combat*. The Greek loss was not more than 500. The next day, the 6th, Smolenski abandoned Valestinós and moved the bulk of his force southwards towards Haniyíres. He received orders from the Crown Prince to retire. The low line it was rendered necessary by the Greek main army to retirement, the Greek main army to Domokós. Had he waited at Valestinós Smolenski must have been outflanked and surrounded. He conducted his retreat with coolness and in good order. His rear-guard presented a fine front to the enemy, and the Turks did not save that their foe had slipped away until five or six hours after his departure. The Glyy-Thuward held the lofty heights of Pilaflek

until the night of May, 7th, when they fell back to Volo and there embarked for Lamia. On May 7th Edhem Pasha arrived at Valestinos from Pharsalos. Memdouk Pasha with the Third Division made a long march on May 8th across the north-eastern slope of Pelion nearly to Volo. Finding no enemy there worthy of his notice, Memdouk marched back to Valestinos and from there to Pharsalos. His Division took part in the battle of Domokos.

Meanwhile a terrible panic had reigned in Volo. The Greek troops and fugitives from Valestinos had been pouring into the seaport on Friday, the 6th, and Saturday, the 7th. Deplorable scenes occurred during the struggle for embarkation, and the civil negroes, especially the women, may be seen with as well as the Greek wounded, he told me of the saving my interview, sailed in Volo, and of the British Consul, attended himself and his colleagues, that the Turkish advance upon the town, that the world, indeed, be between the devil and the deep sea, for the harbour was full of Turkish ships and the town would probably be the scene of a massacre. They were the sailors and the town would probably be the scene of a massacre. They were the sailors and the town would probably be the scene of a massacre.

I reassured Mr. Merlin as to the conduct of the Turkish troops, and advised him, so soon as the battle was over, to send at once a flag of truce to Edhem Pasha himself and ask for the protection of the Turkish headquarters staff and regular troops. This suggestion was adopted by the Consuls. They went out in the small hours of the 8th towards Valestinos, were well received by the Mushir and promised protection. Enver Bey was at once despatched with two battalions and a squadron of cavalry to occupy Volo. He took with him a proclamation promising the inhabitants security for person and property if they submitted peacefully. This was read aloud by Enver Bey to a large mass of the citizens, who received it with great interest, and an amusing account for the Sultan.

Mr. Stevens gives those who have seen the entrance of the Turks into Volo, which can well be imagined, the Greek population as the modern Greeks. All had fled who could. He describes the streets were lined with quaking and no expected instant massacre. So they put on fezzes for the occasion, and

forgetting that the Turk never removes his fez, doffed them as if they were hats; others scrambled to hold the horses of the Sultan's *aide-de-camp*, the three correspondents, the two cavasses, and the one trooper, by whom Volo was entered and occupied. A trembling crowd followed this invading cavalcade to the town hall. It was not easy at first to find a leading notable who would sign the act of formal submission, so panic-stricken were the citizens of Volo. But, after some delay, the formal surrender was made, and the Sultan's *aide-de-camp*, standing on the balcony, promised the protection of his Imperial Majesty Abdul Hamed to all the well-disposed and peaceful inhabitants. Then the timid Greeks burst forth with three cheers delighted were they with the result. As Mr. Stevens says, 'All the Greeks who called him a monster at dawn now emptied their lungs with a rush.'

There was some fear lest the Greek vessels might bombard Volo when the Turks entered. My old friend, Admiral Samatelos, however, was not likely to destroy a town for the doubtful advantage of a few Turks. That same evening the fla



*Psara* steamed away for Halmyros. The Turkish troops behaved admirably at Volo, as they had done throughout Thessaly. Six cannon and a large quantity of war material and food were taken by the Turks at Valestinos and Volo. The Greeks here for the first time took some steps to destroy what might be useful to the enemy. They cut all the telegraph wires, land and submarine, and they destroyed the locomotives.

The second battle of Valestinos is the most difficult combat of the war of which to get a really clear and accurate account. A good description from the Greek side will be found in Appendix V.

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plain that stretches southwards from the spur of Cynoscephalæ to the mountains of Othrys. Pharsalos is not a very defensible position, as it can be easily turned either from Valestinos on the east or Karditsa on the west. Indeed, it was probably the knowledge of Hairi Pasha's advance from Karditsa that made the Greek headquarters staff decide to retire from Pharsalos to the infinitely stronger position of Domokos.

The action at Pharsalos cannot be called a battle. It was really a struggle between the Greek rear guard and the Turkish advance guard. At first the Turks lost rather heavily, as they came across the open ground and attacked the Greek position along the hills four miles north of Pharsalos. The Greek

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back and had to make a rapid retreat, in order to get across the single bridge that crosses the Enipeus. Here the Turkish artillery did deadly execution upon the mass of over 2000 Greek soldiers crowding toward the bridge.

This scene is well described by Mr. William Peel in a letter to the *Daily Telegraph* of May 7th :—

Under the pressure of the assault the Greeks commenced to withdraw, steadily moving up the slopes rising out of the plain. In carrying out this manœuvre, however, they exposed themselves dangerously to the Turkish infantry fire. The losses of the right wing were specially heavy, and the rearguard sacrificed themselves bravely to save the rest of the force.

As we steadily pressed over the ground evacuated by the retreating enemy, I passed an immense number of dead.

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Behind all rose the mountains of Othrys, precipitous and sombre.

The whole plain was covered with Greeks in rapid movement, their ranks being more or less organised, and their line of march being directed towards a stone bridge, which crosses a small plain in the middle of the open country.

Pushing forward, the Turkish artillery took up good positions, and dropped shell after shell among the flying columns. As the dust flew up after each explosion the fugitives of all ranks hastened their flight. Slight field works were thrown up, however, by the rear guard, who kept up a vigorous fire, but their resistance, obstinate as it was, was overwhelmed by the more numerous Turkish infantry. The latter drove them from position to position, and I was more struck than ever with the courage of the Ottoman soldiers, who scorned to take cover, but moved forward firing steadily without so much as kneeling.

And Mr. Gwynne, Reuter's correspondent with the Turkish army. gives a description upon the

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After one or two skirmishes between the advanced posts, the Greek artillery opened fire, their aim being very exact. The Turks, however, steadily advanced, exposing themselves with extraordinary coolness to the enemy's fire. At this early stage the Greeks committed what seemed a very serious mistake in retiring from their commanding position on the hills without offering any determined or sustained resistance, and descending into the plain, which was dominated at nearly every point by the Ottoman artillery. There was, however, one brilliant exception. A single company of Greek infantry remained for a time, and fought against heavy odds with magnificent bravery. Being unsupported, its gallant stand was all in vain, and it, too, was obliged to fall back before the steadily-advancing enemy.

The retreat was carried out in good order, and was sufficiently covered by the rearguard. Several small positions were held for a time and temporarily checked the advance of the Turks, who, as usual, were too recklessly impetuous. But these stands were of brief duration. Few

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In the middle of the plain, on the north side of the river, is the village of Vasili. Here the Turks, who were now swarming over the plain, encountered a strong force of Greeks, apparently prepared to offer a strenuous resistance. They were concealed behind the shoulder of a hill, and, on the approach of the enemy, began a fierce fusillade. The Turks never paused to open out into skirmishing order, but continued to advance with characteristic temerity, and carried the village, not by powder and shot, but simply by the moral effect of their unwavering courage and the fear they inspired. Their undaunted onward march, against a perfect hail of bullets, was truly magnificent. The Greeks did not remain to meet them at closer quarters.

This was the scene of the famous battle of Pharsalea, B.C. 48, when Julius Cæsar with 23,000 men entirely defeated Pompey and his 52,000 soldiers.

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the occupation of Volo, entirely changed the Greek line of communications. Hitherto Volo had been the Greek base, and all supplies and reinforcements had come by sea to Volo and been forwarded thence by rail through Valestinós to Larissa, Trikkala, and Pharsalos. Now this was made impossible. Lamia, or Stylida, the port of Lamia, became the new sea base for the Greek army, which was now stretched from just south of Halmyros to Domokos. But there is no railway from Lamia. The country is very steep and difficult, and the Greeks must have found a great difference, and one for the worse, in their transport after May 5th. While the Greeks lost, the Turks gained, and Edhem <sup>appears</sup> ~~have~~ <sup>by</sup> ~~been~~ <sup>greatly</sup> ~~greatly~~ <sup>re-</sup> ~~ceased~~ <sup>lief</sup> ~~ceased~~

The object of Edhem Pasha's final advance was to sever the Greek army in two by an advance through the mountainous country between Domokos and Halmyros. He also tried, by coming round and behind the Greek right at Domokos, to cut off the retreat of the whole of the Crown Prince's army by occupying the road to Lamia near the Phurka Pass. General Smolenski commanded at Halmyros, and the Crown Prince Constantine with some 35,000 men was at Domokos, with his army in a very strong position and entrenched up to their necks. Indeed the skill of the Greeks in choosing good positions and in fortifying them skilfully was noticeable all through the war. Had the tenacity and courage of the Greeks been ~~one-quarter as good~~ as their engineering skill, the war might have had a different result.

After Edhem had driven the Greeks from the valestinos-Pharsalos line on May 5th, there was another one of those mysterious and inexplicable waits that marked the course of the ~~advance~~. Some attribute these long pauses in ~~the~~ Turkish advance to contradictory orders in ~~from~~ Constantinople, others to want of ammunition, and others to the ineradicable delay of the Turkish character. As regards this last delay



between May 6th and May 15th, it was not improbably caused by the peace negotiations, which had already begun. M. Rhallys told me on May 6th that the Great Powers had offered *une médiation spontanée*, which probably meant that the Greeks had privately appealed to the Powers. Very possibly Edhem's hands were held by his Government in the hopes of saving further bloodshed. It was not till May 15th that a real forward movement was made from Pharsalos. Of course the Greeks had used this breathing-space to strengthen the natural resources of Domokos, and the difficulty of taking such a formidable stronghold was made proportionately more severe. On May 12th Hakki Pasha had advanced southwards from Valestinos upon Halmyros, which the Greeks under Smolenski evacuated without any serious resistance. General Smolenski was careful to explain in a public telegram that he abandoned Halmyros, not by his own wish, but under superior orders. It was in this advance upon Halmyros that our friend, Mr. Montgomery, of the *Standard*, and the Baron E. de Binder-Kriegelstein were captured and badly treated by a Greek cavalry outpost. Smolenski retired towards Lamia or Sourpi 25 miles south-west. On May 14th, a

portion of the Turkish force in Epirus advanced from Metzovo into Western Thessaly and joined hands with Islam Pasha at Trikkala, the extreme right of Edhem's main army. The Mushir was then made Commander-in-Chief of all the Turkish forces in both Provinces.

There had been a great scarcity of provisions in Southern Thessaly during the ten days of inaction, and the Greeks, having now retired into hilly and bleak country south of the Enipeus river, felt the want of food more than the Turks.

Edhem Pasha had now five divisions under his immediate command at Pharsalos. Haidar Pasha had come up with the fourth division from the Melouna Pass. Memdouk Pasha and Hama Pasha had marched back from Valestinos and Volo, with the third and fifth divisions. Neschat Pasha, with the second division, and Hairi Pasha, with the first, had been at Pharsalos since May 5th. These five divisions, with the cavalry and corps of artillery, must have made up a total of 60,000 men.

Hakki Pasha's advance upon Hamyros on May 12th was probably the first step in Edhem's movement to crush the Greek army. It is very likely that Smolenski's rapid retreat was not anticipated by the Mushir, and that Hakki was

meant to keep the Greek division at Halmyros occupied and busy until Memdouk could get through the hilly country between Halmyros and Domokos, and thus sever the Greek extreme right from the Crown Prince's army at Domokos.

On the 15th Memdouk moved south-eastwards from Pharsalos. On the 16th preparations were completed for a general advance. The five divisions at Pharsalos were paraded, and the cavalry sent on in front. The whole Turkish force started southwards at 7 P.M., and bivouacked after a five hours' march, within five miles of Domokos. Mr. Bigham says there had been an idea of a night attack, but no such attempt was made.

The Turkish army breakfasted at da li, and at 6 A.M. began their forward march again. The order of the attack was as follows:—Memdouk was half a dozen miles to the east, or Turkish left, of Domokos. Next to him came Hamdi Pasha's division, which was to execute a turning movement round the Greek right. Hamdi was to pass Domokos some three or four miles to the east, and cut the Greek line of retreat to Lamia. Next was Neschat Pasha's division, facing Domokos. Neschat had one very fine brigade of Nizams, led by Islam Pasha. These were

from Adrianople, and were armed with the new Mauser rifle. Two miles behind Neschat and Hamdi was Haidar's division, in reserve. On the extreme right and to the north-west of Domokos was Hairi's division.

Mr. Bigham gives a graphic description of Domokos in his book :—

Beyond a broad valley, some ten miles long and five broad, dotted with a few cornfields, but for the most part covered with wild grass, rose a frowning height. The face of this rock was traversed by a succession of natural terraces rising one above the other and marking the ascent of the winding road that led to the summit, where stood the town and fortress of Domoko, perched up aloft and dominating from its crags the entire plain below.

The interest of the landscape was, however, almost entirely eclipsed by the contemplation of what was probably one of the strongest defensive positions ever selected by a general. At the foot of the opposite cliff lay three or four lines of infantry intrenched, only to be descried by the artificial straightness of their earthworks. Beyond these some dense black masses marked their reserves, while behind and above each terrace bristled with cannon, their muzzles peeping through the embrasures, until on the very crest four great siege guns crowned the ramparts of the citadel, completing the defence.

The attack upon Domokos appears to have been a series of terrible blunders, but I have not evidence to prove whose was the fault that led to such a heavy loss with such a slight

result. As usual Edhem Pasha's strategy was excellent. His plan to envelop the Greek right by Hamdi's and Memdouk's flank march, and so cut off their retreat, was excellent. Equally, as usual, the tactics of the Divisional Commanders were inferior, and one terrible and unnecessary blunder was made—the attempt to storm the frowning height of Domokos by a front attack and with a single brigade. There are at least three points that want explanation in the attack upon Domokos: (1) why Islam Pasha's brigade was ordered to attack such a position alone; (2) why this brigade was then left unsupported either by infantry reserves or by the corps artillery; (3) why Hairi Pasha remained immovable on Neschat's right without attempting to help him or to make a diversion. To these there may be added a fourth—why Hamdi Pasha was so long in getting into action on the Greek right; and even a fifth—why Memdouk did not succeed in cutting the Lamia road. Memdouk started on the 15th, and he might surely have reached, *viâ* Vouzi, the Greek line of retreat by the morning of the 18th. As regards Hamdi's delay, Mr. Bigham attributes it to the difficulty of the hill approach, and thinks that officer did his best. He says: "It was

almost entirely due to Hamdi's patient advance that one day terminated the battle, and that both sides were spared the immense loss of life that would inevitably have accompanied an assault."

The first movement in the battle was Hamdi's flank march down the valley to the Turkish left, and then southwards across the hills towards Káratsali. His division disappeared from sight in the gorges of the hills, and did not reappear till 6 P.M., though the sounds of occasional firing during the day revealed its existence. Hairi Pasha moved to the right front for about three miles, and then sheltering his men behind a considerable rise in the low ground to the north-west of Domokos, remained absolutely inactive during the day.

Haidar Pasha with the Fourth Division and Riza Pasha with the corps of artillery were in reserve behind Neschat Pasha, and about four miles north of Domokos. There remained then the Second Division under Néschat Pasha, and this division, or rather one brigade of it, bore the brunt of the fighting. According to all the independent evidence that can be collected, this was a cruel and needless blunder, and involved a terrible sacrifice of gallant lives. After a little preliminary firing, Islam Pasha's

Brigade advanced at 2 o'clock against the Greek position. The brigade consisted of six battalions, about 5000 men, all young Nizams, armed with the Mauser rifle, from the Adrianople Army Corps. They had been halted about 2000 yards from the Greek entrenchments. Directly they deployed into line the Greek artillery opened upon them with shrapnel, and with deadly effect. Neschat then brought two batteries into action with but little effect, and Hairi fired a few shots from a single battery. There was no cover for the superb infantry that was being sent to certain destruction. The ground was level, and the flat plain was only varied by cornfields. The young Ottoman soldiers tramped steadily forward and soon came under a murderous rifle fire as well, but they did not flinch. As Mr. Bigham says: "At no moment could one notice the least sign of wavering in the Turkish line, and the men engaged appeared to regard the whole thing as a pleasure excursion in which they had the good fortune to be in front."

Mr. G. A. Steevens also says of this intrepid attack:—

And then there burst from the Greek lines a hellish storm. Savage volleys snarled along the trenches in

front and left and right. They came so fast that you would have said it was the Greeks who had repeating Mausers, instead of our dotted brigade. The flashes ran like red lightning along the front; the dull smoke rose from them in rolls, and hung sullenly on the skirts of the hills. Still the young men went on. How pitifully their poor little individual puffs showed by the side of the smashing, crashing hail of the Greeks! Yet they went on, and now, on the Greek right, we saw figures hurrying helter-skelter back from the most advanced trenches. They were Italian red-shirts, we found out afterwards, and they left their dead behind them. But from the Greek centre and left the lead came thicker yet, as the brigade pushed on and on—and then at 500 yards, or so, it stopped. On the low ground, before that torrent of fire, every man must have been swept down; still they clung on, firing their Mauser rifles.

was not till 4 o'clock that the fire slackened, probably because both sides were short of ammunition. Islam's Brigade had got within 500 yards of the Greek entrenchments, but they had lost over 1200 men, that is at least 20 per cent. of their total number. To again quote the *Times* correspondent, "It was the most inhuman spectacle imaginable, as the men could be seen dropping right and left, while the masses of their comrades of the First Division (Hairi's) remained in rear protected by the ground."

At 4.30 Neschat at last moved his Second Brigade forward to support the Adrianople bat-



talions. The Greeks having exhausted their shrapnel, these fresh troops reached the fighting line almost untouched at 5 o'clock, and the Greeks at once abandoned their first line of entrenchments and retired up the hill. During this retreat the Greeks suffered heavily from the rifle fire of Neschat's Division. At 3.30 Riza Pasha with the corps of artillery came up and added their fire (both shell and shrapnel) to that of the infantry. These guns came into action just three hours too late, but it would not be fair to blame Riza Pasha, who is an active and highly skilled officer and always anxious to be in the front.

Those of the Greeks that escaped had now taken refuge in the second line of entrenchments, which were placed well up the slopes of Domokos, and which seemed almost impregnable. A front attack might have succeeded had Hairi joined in with his Division, and had the whole Turkish artillery been well and actively employed; but it must have cost the assaulting troops very heavily, and it might have failed had the Greeks fought with real tenacity.

Hamdi's arrival on the Greek right flank at this critical moment averted the risk. He had been steadily pressing back the Greek right

under Colonel Mastrapas, and had occupied the villages of Kitia and Karatzali. Hamdi's vanguard with a battery came into action just east of Domokos at 6.15, and at once poured a heavy raking fire into the lower Greek entrenchments and upon the Greek artillery. Colonel Mavromichalis had been severely wounded. The Greeks now began hurriedly to retire higher up the height of Domokos towards the citadel, which stands over 300 feet above the plain. Unfortunately the troops both of Hamdi's and Neschat's divisions were too tired to press their advantage that evening. At 7.30 the firing was over and the weary Turks bivouacked for the night in the positions they had so gallantly taken. The usual opportunity was given to the Greeks to slip away in the darkness, and the Greeks as usual were not slow to profit by their respite. Directly night fell, the Crown Prince and his staff ordered a retreat, and this was carried out with the utmost celerity by the Hellenic forces.

The *Standard* correspondent with the Greek army gave a fair description of the battle of Domokos :—

At half-past eleven the Turks were seen advancing, and ere long they posted a battery to the right of the Pharsalamia Road, which winds through hills below Domoko,

and can be seen running across the plain beyond in a straight line towards Pharsala. A desultory fire was kept up by the Turkish guns till half-past three, with the evident purpose of finding out the strength of the Greek guns in position. Three more batteries were then brought forward by the Turks, and placed in position near the first, and the infantry advance at once began in earnest. They poured in great strength down the Pharsala Road, and over the foot of the Othrys Hills, toward a solitary hill in the plain, camel-humped in shape, three miles in front of the Greek positions.

This hill afforded the only good cover in the plain, and the Turks gathered their forces behind its shelter. Then the leading columns deployed, their advance heralded by the fire of their batteries. Two Greek fifteen-centimetre Krupp guns, placed in position in the old Castle and on the hill top beyond, now opened fire. The Turks were well within their range, and the Greek guns were well laid that their fire for some time retarded the Turkish advance.

A body of Turkish cavalry endeavoured to advance by the road, but the enormous projectiles scattered them, and they hurriedly took cover again behind the hill, much to the amusement of the Greeks in their earthworks, who cheered lustily as the enemy's cavalry fell back. The Turkish infantry, however, pressed steadily forward in spite of the fire, and battalion after battalion pushed unfalteringly on towards the Greek advanced lines, driving them steadily back upon their entrenchments, in spite of the fire of twenty-one field and mountain guns in position on the Domoko Hills.

The Turkish apparent objective was the Greek centre and the possession of the Lamia Road; and so persistent was the attack that they nearly carried the trenches, and

were on the point of crossing bayonets with the Greeks, when a contingent of 300 Garibaldians, under Cipriani, the Socialist, poured a galling flank fire, from under the cover of the poplar trees skirting the road, into the enemy, maintaining themselves most gallantly until the Turkish advance was checked. Cipriani's band lost twelve killed and eighteen wounded before being compelled to retire from want of ammunition. They were cheered by the Greeks as they passed through them. Their wounded limped to the nearest ambulance, and asked for cigarettes, their cheerfulness presenting a great contrast to the dejected air of the Greek wounded.

The fighting was now telling on the *morale* of the Hellenic troops, two hundred of their wounded soldiers finding their way to an ambulance, the first on the road to Lamia, where the surgeons were now hard at work. Colonel Mavromichaelis, who was in command of the left wing, was severely wounded in the hip, and his nephew and aide-de-camp was struck by a ball in the head, and died while being carried to the ambulance.

At six o'clock the Turkish attack upon the Greek centre gradually ceased, and the troops fell slowly back. At the same time, however, a movement of the Turks against the Greek right, which I had been watching for some time anxiously, developed with great rapidity.

Colonel Macrise, who was in command of the Greek right wing, had seen the storm gathering, and had been continually sending for reinforcements, which were but tardily despatched to him. Three thousand of the Reserve at last arrived from the hills beyond the Lamia road to his assistance.

Three times that number would have been of no avail against so formidable an attack as that directed against the position, the Turks in overwhelming force threatening to

cut us off from the Lamia road. The attack on the centre had, in fact, been only a feint to occupy the Greeks' attention, while the real objective was their right. The rest of the Reserves, three thousand infantry and five hundred cavalry, were ordered at seven o'clock to cover the Lamia road in the direction of the Vale of Fyrka:

Leaving the front line in their positions to be quietly withdrawn at midnight, an orderly retreat was begun, the only guns left behind being the heavy Krupps in position at the Castle. The Crown Prince, with his staff, an escort of cavalry, and the ambulance, first drew off, and were soon followed by the whole army.

Next morning the Ottoman soldiers found the steep and impregnable slopes and heights of Domokos entirely abandoned. The trenches were empty, except for the ammunition and baggage left behind by the flying Greeks. The four big guns which had frowned over the plain from the citadel of Domokos were still there, but the enemy was nowhere to be seen. Unfortunately, Memdoug Pasha, who was on Hamdi's left and who was meant to cut the Greek retreat somewhere near the Phurka Pass, was unable to cross the difficult hills and gorges in time, and only his advanced skirmishers came in contact with the Greek army. Seifulah Pasha, the indefatigable and ever forward staff officer, organised a pursuit with what force he could scrape together

from the nearest division. Edhem Pasha was far away, but Seifulah got four battalions from Hamdi, and three squadrons of cavalry. With these few horsemen and with a battery of artillery, Seifulah chased the Greeks along the road to the Phurka Pass, which is ten miles south-east of Domokos. He found the enemy holding the pass in some force, and was obliged to await the arrival of his infantry, who did not come up till 3 o'clock on the 18th. The whole Turkish force then advanced, firing as rapidly as possible, and the Greeks at once abandoned their almost unassailable position and left the summit of the pass. This was the last defensible and strong position short of Lamia, and its capture was of great importance to the Turks. On the next day (May 19th) the whole of Hamdi's Division came up, crossed the Phurka, and marched down to the plain that stretches between the pass and the sea.

When Hamdi's division descended the Phurka Pass, they found the remains of the Greek army drawn up north of Lamia. There had been a considerable *débandade* going on during the rapid retreat from Domokos, and the Crown Prince could hardly rely upon half the numbers he had massed in the impregnable redoubts of

Domokos. The Greek line, about 15,000 strong, was drawn up along a low ridge of hills three miles south of Lamia. There was soon an exchange of rifle firing, and during the action the civil authorities of Lamia sent to ask that their town might be peaceably occupied by the Turks. Seifulah Pashia replied that Lamia could not be entered so long as the Greek army was drawn up between the Turks and the city, but that the citizens need fear nothing so long as no armed resistance was offered.

Soon after mid-day the combat became pretty brisk, and a general engagement took place. At two o'clock, however, the Greek fire suddenly ceased, and a white flag was hoisted by the Greek centre. In both forces the "cease firing" was now blown by the bugles, and two Greek officers with a flag of truce advanced towards the Turkish lines. Here Seifulah Pasha met them and agreed to an armistice for twenty-four hours. The whole Greek army then retired rapidly in the direction of Thermopylæ, passing by Lamia without halting. Edhem Pasha, who had remained at Domokos, received the news of the temporary cessation of hostilities there, and also orders from Constantinople to conclude an armistice. Early the next day, May 20th, an

*aide-de-camp* of the Crown Prince arrived, and a truce for fifteen days was formally concluded. A similar truce was arranged on the Epirote side before Arta. On June 3rd a further armistice was arranged, to last during the peace negotiations, terminable at twenty-four hours' notice by either side. A neutral zone of 1000 yards broad was then demarcated by the staff officers of the two armies. The Turks occupied Lamia on May 21st, but withdrew directly, as that town had been assigned to the Greeks. As the result of the month's campaign, which began with the Melouna fight on April 17th and practically ended with the battle of Domokos on May 17th, the Turkish army had driven the Greeks out of the whole of Thessaly right down to the ancient frontier before the cession of Thessaly in 1886. In Epirus the positions remained exactly as they were at the opening of the war.



## CHAPTER XI.

## THE WAR IN EPIRUS.

MUCH less is known about the combats that took place in Epirus, the western theatre of the war, than in Thessaly. In Epirus there was only one English correspondent with the Turkish army, and not many with the Greeks, whereas in Thessaly there were scores of correspondents on the Greek side, and half-a-dozen with the Turkish headquarters. Every event that took place in Thessaly was therefore chronicled in one shape or another. The Turks had two divisions in Epirus at the outbreak of the war, one at Janina under Ahmed Hifzi Pasha, the other at Luros under Mustapha Pasha. The Greeks had a division at Arta under Col. Manos. These were reinforced from time to time, till Col. Manos had at least 15,000 men available for his invasion of Epirus.

The first attack of the Greeks seems to have met with considerable success. Col. Manos managed to penetrate eighteen miles into Turkish territory, and to cause considerable alarm at Janina. Mr. Dillon goes so far as to say that

he possesses proof of his statement that the Turkish division which had been driven out of Filippiada rushed panic-stricken into Janina, and that Col. Manos, had he pressed on at once, could have easily occupied that fortress and the whole of Epirus. The fact seems to be that the first Greek onslaught was successful and that Filippiada was captured. Strong Turkish reinforcements came up, however, and the Greek advance was stopped at the pass of Pente-pigadia. The Turks then assumed the offensive and forced the Greeks back on Arta with heavy loss to the invaders.

The course of the campaign was as follows: On April 19th the Greeks crossed the river Arachthos in force and thus invaded Epirus. Considerable fighting took place. On the same day, a Greek ex-deputy named Skaltsodimos crossed the frontier, five-and-twenty miles north, and occupied Syrako, about twelve miles south-east of Janina. On the 21st the fighting continued, and the Greeks claim to have taken three Turkish villages, and to have repulsed a Turkish counter-attack at Vlacherna. The next day Col. Manos advanced as far as Filippiada, about twelve miles from Arta, and the Turks abandoned the town. On the 23rd, Greek

telegrams asserted the capture of Salagora and the advance of Col. Manos's force upon Pentepigadia. On the 25th the Greeks claimed to have entered Pentepigadia on the 23rd, but said that the Turks were endeavouring to recapture the village the same evening. Turkish telegrams of the same date stated that Pentepigadia had been recaptured.

This repulse of the Greeks from Pentepigadia on Friday, April the 23rd, was the turning-point of the campaign in Epirus, just as the battle of Mati-Deliler on the same day laid northern Thessaly at the mercy of the Turks. Despite the florid telegrams with which the Greek press was filled, Colonel Manos was unable to advance any further towards Janina. There was a severe combat on the 26th and 27th near Pentepigadia, which Colonel Manos himself described as indecisive. He asked for reinforcements "in order to protect his rear," and Colonel Dairaktaris was sent with 2000 men from Athens. A very significant Greek dispatch was sent from Arta in the evening of April the 27th :—

The execution of the original plan of invading Epirus by successively moving on Pentepigadia, Sikoron, Janina, and Metzovo has been temporarily suspended in consequence of the events of yester-

From that time forward we hear no more of Greek successes in Epirus. On the 24th Colonel Manos's staff returned to Arta with the Greek artillery, and there was a general influx of Christian villagers into Arta. It was at Pentepigadia that Mr. Clement Harris disappeared. Sensational stories were told of the courage shown by a Greek battalion in rescuing a wounded major and the corpse of a Greek captain. The Greek rear-guard seems to have lost heavily in its retreat, especially at the bridge of Plaka.

On May 5th Hifzi Pasha reported that the Turkish troops had occupied the summit of Mount Kilberini opposite Arta. Official telegrams from Athens excuse Colonel Manos on the ground that "he was for several days telegraphing for reinforcements, but with the political crisis and confusion reigning at Athens no heed was given. The commander was ultimately obliged to order a retreat."

On May 2nd the Greek papers stated that "1,000 Greek irregulars, led by a young woman of great beauty, had left for Epirus." Nothing more was heard of this band. On May 4th Colonel Manos was recalled from Epirus, and Colonel Vassos, of Cretan notoriety, was appointed to succeed him.

The Greeks made a second effort to invade Epirus on May 11th, with a force of all arms nearly 20,000 strong, divided into three parties. Two brigades under Colonel Bairaktaris made a dash for Filippiada and the Louros. At the same time a third brigade under Colonel Botsaris attacked Nicopolis behind Prevesa, while the gunboat flotilla bombarded the fortress. Two of these brigades attacked the Turks, who, under Osman Pasha, occupied a strong position from Gribovo to Strevena. A severe battle took place at Gribovo, five miles out of Arta, on May 14th and 15th. One brigade went northwards and tried to force the road to Filippiada, the other marched westward and tried to seize the bridge over the Louros. The object was to cut off supplies and reinforcements from Prevesa. The *Daily News* correspondent with the Greek army of Epirus on May 14th thus described their movement :—

At last the authorities here have decided to take the offensive once more. On Tuesday evening, May 11th, a battalion of Evzones with a battery of screw guns was sent across the Arta bridge, and on Wednesday afternoon Colonel Bairaktaris with a brigade of eight thousand men, formerly of the Slav, moving in Tenth Regiments, and the Corps of Gendarmerie, with three squadrons of cavalry and two batteries, occupied the fort on the heights of Imareti, also

taking up entrenched positions in the well-wooded campos facing the Turkish posts.

At the same time another brigade under Colonel Goulinopoulos, composed of the Ninth Regiment, the third battalion of Evzones, and two batteries, was advanced along the other side of the campos towards the bridge over the Louros, leading by the direct Janina-Prevesa road to Philippiada, where the Turks were in force. Yet another brigade, the Second, under Colonel Doxas, was to co-operate from the direction of Plaka, having crossed the Arakthos at Pramata and Agnanta, while the Botzaris phalanx of two thousand men was sent to cut off Prevesa and to prevent any aid to the Turks from there.

The Turks were holding strongly entrenched positions, with many guns in the plain—Philippiada, Strevina, Hanopoulos, at the entrance of the Pente Pigadia Pass—the heights on either side of the campos abreast of those villages, and on this side two lofty hills, the highest about twelve hundred feet; also a flanking mamelon of about three hundred feet. They had two batteries of mountain guns, distributed between the furthest hill and the flanking mamelon on the right, and a battery of 10-centimetre guns at Strevina. I have no means of estimating their infantry strength at these positions, but judging by the sustained intensity and volume of their fire, they must have been in considerable force.

And the *Standard* correspondent at Athens gave the following account of the Greek failure on May 17th :—

The following account of the recent fighting in Epirus is obtained from an official source, and affords a striking

example of the manner in which the Greeks carried on the campaign, and explains both the confusion that prevails in their ranks and in their reports of their operations.

On the 13th of May Colonel Golfinopoulos, with four thousand men, was ordered to take the bridge crossing the river Louro, and to intercept the Turkish communications with Prevesa. Colonel Bairaktaris, with two thousand five hundred men of the *élite* of the troops, gendarmes, and police, was directed to support the movement and to protect the left flank. Colonel Botsaris, with two thousand men of the Epirus Legion, was ordered to land at Nikopolis, protected by the guns of the Fleet, with the object of effecting a diversion.

Colonel Botsaris executed his part of the plan, and seized the hills surrounding Nikopolis. However, Colonel Bairaktaris, instead of following his instructions, imagined himself strong enough to capture Gribovon, garrisoned by two thousand Turks. Gribovon is a strong position, perched on a hill, accessible only by a steep pass strongly fortified with earthworks. In spite of all these difficulties, the first line of earthworks was captured by Colonel Bairaktaris after a hand-to-hand fight.

At daybreak on the following morning, the attack recommenced and lasted until eight in the evening. The Turks were driven back from the entrance to the pass, but the Greeks lost heavily, on account of the steep ground being rendered so slippery as to be almost unclimbable owing to the rain, which continued falling throughout the whole day. In the meantime, Bairaktaris' attack on Gribovon was thwarted by the seizure of the Louro bridge by Golfinopoulos, who, instead of receiving support from Bairaktaris, was obliged to send him reinforcements.

The object of these concerted movements was to cut the Turkish communication with Prevesa and to stop the

alleged atrocities. These objects were altogether unattained at the end of the day's fighting, and when, on the 15th inst., Bairaktaris was about to continue his attack on Gribovo, he received peremptory orders from the Government, which obliged him and Golfinopoulis to withdraw to the positions occupied previous to the 13th of May.

This order was given in consequence of the remonstrances of the Powers as to Greece taking the offensive. Botsaris also withdrew from the heights of Nikopolis, re-embarking his troops for Salagora. The armistice tacitly commenced by the promise of the Greeks to abstain from offensive action.

Both Greek attacks, especially that around Gribovo, were repulsed with heavy loss, one battalion being nearly destroyed. The Turks were strongly entrenched, the usual position of the two combatants being thus reversed. The Greeks estimated their own loss at over seven hundred. It was probably double that number. Osman Pasha reported the complete defeat of the Greeks on May 16th and their retreat to Arta. Osman gave the Turkish loss at 900, and that of the Greeks at 2000 men. The Greek force then fell back into Arta, and nothing further was done by the Greek army of Epirus. The brigade under Colonel Botsaris was forced to retire across the shallow waters of the bay north of Prevesa. The poor wretches had a terrible



experience and lost heavily, as the following account will show. It is from a telegram of the *Daily News* correspondent with the Greeks, dated Patras, May 18th :—

I found most of the Botzaris phalanx at Karvassara, so that it was not necessary to go further for news. It appears that here also there had been a big fight, lasting three days like ours. It was followed by a hurried retreat, degenerating into a rout, in which many men were lost.

It will be remembered that this corps of three thousand strong was landed at the mouth of the Louros on Wednesday, May 12th. Even from the outset there appears to have been a lack of proper arrangements, for hardly any boats were available, and the majority of the force were compelled to swim or wade ashore. A landing, however, was effected without opposition during the night and early morning of Wednesday. They then took up strong positions on all the available roads from Prevesa to Philippiada. Here, during Thursday afternoon and the whole of Friday and Saturday, they were engaged, as had been expected. Turks, about 2000 strong, made a sortie from Prevesa, and, after a hot artillery and infantry fire, stormed the Greek position with the bayonet, returning repeatedly to the assault, though each time repulsed with great loss. The Greeks maintained their positions, but as they had had no time to entrench themselves suffered severely. Their loss, however, was small as compared with that of the Turks.

By Saturday evening both forces were completely exhausted, the Greeks also having suffered from hunger and thirst. No doubt this applies equally to the Turks. The Greeks say the Albanian soldiers fought magnificently,

having wonderful pluck and utter indifference to death. The position, however, was unchanged, the Greeks still holding their original positions. Then, late at night, as at Imareti came the order to retire into the Greek territory.

And now one of the commanders, I know not which, committed the mistake of informing the weary, hungry, rain-soaked troops that they must retreat quickly, or they would be cut off. As a natural consequence something very near a panic ensued. The men retreated in fairly good order to the shore, with the exception of some two hundred, whom there was apparently no means of warning, and who therefore are either killed or prisoners. At the shore, however, the panic reached its height. The Turks were still quiet; but when the Greeks found there were no boats, they fell into despair. Finally, they started to wade across the arm of the sea dividing them from Greek territory.

It was a two-and-a-half hours' job, floundering breast high through the sea, and, just as dawn broke, the Turks, discovering what was happening, began to shell groups of the waders, whose position was now most distressing. Many were drowned, either falling when wounded or stumbling out of their depth, and the condition of the force when at last it reached a place of safety was in the last degree lamentable. They had been forced to leave their wounded behind. In many cases numbers had lost their weapons, and all were worn out, dejected, and miserable.

In all the three days' fighting and in the rout Colonel Botzaris' men estimate that they lost a hundred and twenty killed, and over two hundred wounded, some of whom were perforce abandoned, and two hundred missing. Thus with those at Imareti, the total loss of the Epirus army in three days' fighting amounted to nearly five hundred killed, and

one thousand wounded and missing, many of whom may be accounted as dead. It is a huge bill, and has been said to prove what—except that the Greek soldier knows how to die?

This foolish move into Epirus cost the Greeks dearly, for it provoked the Turks to make the attack upon Domokos. There is little doubt, from the consensus of accounts, that the Greeks, who began with a slight success, were, by the night of May 15th, badly beaten and in no condition to resist the Turks. The total Greek losses on the Epirus side were from 3000 to 4000 *hors de combat*, one-third killed and two-thirds wounded. The Turkish loss was less than half—1,500 killed and wounded. The Epirus command was practically independent. It was not till May 14th that Edhem Pasha assumed the direct command of the Epirus divisions.

The Greek fleet did not accomplish much during the war. It was very superior to any naval force Turkey had afloat, and was expected to do great things. There was certainly no reason why the Greek fleet should not have captured any of the Turkish islands in the Ægean Sea that were worth taking, and have bombarded Salonica and thereby seriously com-

It missed the Turkish communications. With the exception of the bombardment of Prevesa and of Platamona and Katerina, and the capture of ourselves, the Greek fleet accomplished nothing. On April 19th a Greek squadron began the bombardment of Prevesa at the mouth of the Gulf of Arta. The bombardment was continued next day with indecisive results. According to the Greeks, all but two of the Turkish forts were silenced and much damage was done to the town. According to the Turks, the Greek fleet drew off after a futile bombardment with one of their ships in a sinking condition. Whichever version is correct, no practical result ensued. On April 23rd the Western Squadron bombarded and captured the unfortified town of Aghi-Saranta on the Epirote Coast, and destroyed some Turkish stores.

About the same time the Greek Eastern Squadron bombarded Platamona, the first Turkish fortified post north of the river Peneius. The Greeks claim to have blown up a Turkish magazine and to have spoiled food supplies at Platamona. This was on the 21st. The next day the same squadron bombarded Katerina, ten miles to the north. They destroyed a number of houses, but did little real damage to either place.

Salonica, the second Turkish city in Europe and a most important seaport, lay practically at the mercy of the Greek fleet during the whole of the war. Only two small batteries defended it, and the torpedoes, with which the entrance to the bay was said to be strewn, were for the most part a myth.\* So alarmed were the foreign consuls for the safety of Salonica and the non-Turkish residents there, that they begged their governments to send men-of-war to protect them. Why the Greek fleet did not attack Salonica is a mystery.

## CHAPTER XII.

## THE VALE OF TEMPE AND OUR CAPTURE.

ON Monday morning, May 4th, we left Larissa for the last time. I was up at 5.30, hoping to get off by 7, but there was so much to do in the way of packing and settling the inevitable little matters which always crop up at the last moment, that we did not get away till after 9.30. Then our escort were late, and Raouf Bey seemed to find much difficulty in getting his four troopers together.

Adieus to our English friends had to be made. We had said good-bye to the Mushir and Quartier-General the night before. Bigham and Weldon came to see us off, and we exchanged hearty greetings. Gwynne and Steevens also came on horseback to say good-bye. A nicer lot of men than the English correspondents with the Turkish army it would have been difficult to find. It is wonderful how soon a spirit of *camaraderie* springs up among men of the same race in a foreign land. We parted

from our friends with genuine regret. Gwynne and Steevens were going to ride part of the way with us, but owing to our arabadje taking the wrong road out of the town, we missed them.

It was 9.45 before we actually got under way—Ellis, myself, Raouf Bey, four troopers of our escort, and the invaluable Elia, our Police Dragoman. There was also the araba with our baggage, a very ram-shackly weather-beaten old carriage; but it stood the journey and the awful roads in a way that a smarter vehicle could not possibly have done.

After a very hot and trying ride of four hours, we reached at 2 o'clock the village of Baba at the entrance of the valley. There the people were pleased to see us again, and thanked us for asking the Mushir to send the Turkish regulars, who had protected them against marauders. We left Baba at 3.30 and had a delightful ride through the whole length of the beautiful vale. The narrow road follows closely the course of the Peneius, here a rapid and powerful current, which forces its way from the plain of Thessaly through the steep and overhanging cliffs of Ossa. High up the almost sheer mountains tower above the glancing stream. The banks are richly lined with trees,

every now and then a patch of green meadow relieves the scenery from being all water and rock.

There are but little signs of life in the valley after the picturesque town of Ambelakia is passed. Few places have so romantic or so secure a site as Ambelakia, the chief town of this district. It is perched aloft on a small plateau near the very top of the rocky hillside on the right or southern side of Tempe. To it we heard the women and children of the neighbouring villages had fled for safety, until they were reassured by the good conduct of the Turkish troops. We much regretted not having time to visit this picturesque and attractive town, but it was getting late and time pressed. At its lower end the vale of Tempe expands, and the scenery becomes richer and more exquisite. Looking down from the top of the pass, the river seems to form a lake below, surrounded with meadowland of the richest green and with well-grown plane trees. It is like a piece of English lake scenery, sparkling, verdant and diversified. But the bright blue and cloudless sky and the pellucid air are entirely southern.

It was nearly 5.30 P.M. when we reached the bridge over the Peneius. Here the valley



opens out still wider into a succession of and verdant meadows, where many cattle and sheep were pasturing, and where some fields of corn were almost ripe for the sickle. To our dismay we found the bridge broken. A party of some fifty Turkish soldiers, together with villagers, were slowly clearing away the *débris* and making some show of repairing the bridge. It was, however, quite impassable for horses, much more for wheeled vehicles, and only a very agile pedestrian could skip from bit to bit of the floating wreckage and so cross the foaming torrent.

The native Greeks, who seemed on the most friendly terms with the Ottoman soldiers, told us that we could easily get a boat at Tsaghesi, a village on the south of the Peneius, and some two hours further on. The road from Larissa to Platamona crosses the Peneius by the bridge, which we found broken; and Platamona, the first Turkish town on the coast road, lies some two hours north-east of the bridge. From Tsaghesi by sea to Platamona would be from ten to twelve miles round the mouth of the river Peneius.

The road to Tsaghesi was in very bad repair—in places almost impassable for the

Théba. It was pretty clear that the retreating Greeks had purposely cut up the road considerably. The country was rich, and we passed several flourishing villages still full of inhabitants. The men mostly stepped off the road as they saw the cavalcade of fezzes appearing. The women showed much less anxiety, and many of them rushed boldly to the doors and roadside to see us.

One very handsome Greek girl appeared in a picturesque farmhouse above the road, and stood waving her handkerchief to us. She was the only good-looking woman we had seen in Thessaly; but we had to hurry on, as it was fast getting dark. Several men, whom Raouf Bey said had been soldiers or Euzonoi, passed us, one man the handsomest and most martial Greek I had seen. He strode by with his hat cocked and quite a defiant air. It was refreshing to see a Greek who held a bold attitude and who looked as if he could and would fight.

There were also many pigs in the villages and among the forest glades. These unclean animals gave Raouf Bey and our troopers great offence. Pigs are, of course, abhorrent to all Mussulmans. Never had our impassive and passionless lieutenant shown such emotion since

the opening of the campaign. He made many signs and noises of aversion and disgust, spitting, coughing, and blowing from him with irritation the odour and presence of the defiling pigs. Ellis was so amused with this that he took special pleasure in calling Raouf Bey's attention to every pig visible along the route. The sight of each fresh pig produced a fresh fit of coughing and disgust on the part of Raouf. This caused Ellis infinite amusement, and Elia was also silly pleased. Elia was a cosmopolitan, and though he did not love the pig, he would never have hesitated to eat it rather than suffer hunger. Raouf Bey, I believe, would have starved sooner than touch the unclean thing.

It was not till 7.45, and almost dark, that we reached Tsaghesi. The town seemed full of people, who crowded round us; but there were no local authorities to be found. I asked if there were any Greek authorities. They said no; but the chief authority was a Turk, who lived at an hour's distance up the valley. I said we must have a boat to go to Platamona there and then. Raouf Bey and the troopers seemed a little alarmed at the number of Greeks who gathered round our horses. Elia, who speaks Greek, busied himself about the boat. We went into an

then café and had some refreshment—bread, coffee, and liqueur. All the inhabitants crowded into the café, sat round us, stared very hard, and seemed to regard us as some kind of strange animals.

At last some men volunteered to get us a boat. It was pitch dark, and it was with difficulty that we got our baggage down to the beach. Four active young Arnauts, who were living in the place, sons of an Albanian who had settled there, volunteered to help us, and carried down the various packages. We then said farewell to Raouf Bey and to our faithful troopers, who had been so long with us. Raouf was anxious to come in the boat with us to Platamona, conceiving that his instructions from Edhem Pasha bound him at least to deliver us safely to the next Turkish post. I did not think it right to leave the troopers alone in a village full of Greeks, who did not seem over friendly, and where one side or the other might have been tempted to offer some violence. Accordingly I declined Raouf's offer to accompany us, and advised him, if his horses were not too tired, to ride back to the broken bridge that night, where the Turkish detachment was quartered. It was fortunate for Raouf that he

did not come with us, for he certainly, being a Turkish military officer, would have been a legitimate prisoner of war. We heard afterwards that he did go back to the Peneius Bridge the same night, and so escaped all violence and danger.

We then pushed off in a good-sized rowing boat, which I wished to take us direct to Platamona. I found, however, that the crew intended to take us on board a caique, a little coasting schooner with two big lateen sails. In vain I protested that this was needless, that there was no wind, and that we could easily row the distance in two or three hours. Elia said it was quite impossible, that the sea was dangerous, and that we must go on board the caique. The darkness of the night and my inability to speak to the Greek sailors made me helpless; so we embarked on the caique. All our subsequent troubles and adventures arose from this mistake. Elia, we discovered afterwards, was a bad sailor, and mortally afraid of the sea, especially in a small craft, so he very naturally preferred the large caique to a small rowing boat.

The caique men were, I had reason afterwards to believe, in the plot to capture us. There were no signs of any Greek men-of-war

when we reached Tsaghesi. But in all probability special messengers were sent along the coast to tell the nearest Greek warships of our arrival and departure, with the result that is about to be narrated. The sails were set, but there was hardly enough wind to move them. Elia made us up some sort of beds on deck, and there we lay down, as we were, with our clothes on, Ellis and I side by side and Elia at our feet. I was rather suspicious of the Greek sailors—there were three—and so we kept our pistols loose and handy. Elia promised to keep watch, but he and Ellis were soon sound asleep, and I dozed off at intervals. All night we tossed about; there was plenty of swell, but very little wind. It got very cold after midnight, and this kept me awake. Daybreak was welcome, but, as it got light, I was horrified to find that we were little more than abreast of Tsaghesi, though some six miles out. Platamona, with its great square white fort, which the Greeks had bombarded a fortnight before, to little purpose, was on our port bow about eight miles away. I aroused Elia and proposed to take the small dinghy, which was towing astern, and row to Platamona, but Elia again vetoed this proposal as dangerous. I abandoned it because the dinghy, though it

could have taken us three, could not at the same time have taken our luggage. The Greek sailors got out a couple of sweeps, and made a pretence of rowing, but the caique made so little headway that I took one of the sweeps and rowed myself. This went on for some five hours, during which we got fairly near to Platamona, between two and three miles.

Then about ten o'clock the Greek captain said he saw two warships going along the coast to Tsaghesi. We looked carefully, but could see nothing. An hour later, however, three warships did indeed appear, and two headed direct for our caique. The Greeks said they were Italian ships, not Greek. This, I believe, was said to deceive us, as they feared we might take to the dinghy and so escape. However, as one of the vessels was a torpedo-boat, and they were not more than two miles off, it was clearly impossible to escape, so we made no such attempt; besides, we were well within our rights in sailing along the coast. We were non-combatants, and had in no way contravened the rules of neutrality. No blockade of the coast had then been proclaimed.

The men-of-war came up rapidly, and at 11.30 the leading vessel, a large old-fashioned

gunboat, hailed our caique and ordered the sails to be lowered. The captain instantly obeyed. The captain of the gunboat then ordered us all on board, and sent two boatloads of armed sailors to our caique. I declined to leave the boat, told the captain in French that we were non-combatants going to England *via* Salonica, and insisted upon our right to continue our journey. No doubt the fact that we had a Turkish policeman in uniform wearing a fez excited suspicion in the minds of our captors. The Greeks are naturally a suspicious people, often childishly suspicious. Ellis and I had taken off our fezzes early in the morning and put on wideawakes on account of the intense heat, which was even worse on the sea than on the plains of Thessaly, where it had been terrific.

The altercation lasted half an hour. The great war vessels circled round and round our caique with all their guns and torpedoes trained upon us. The captain and other officers by turns coaxed and objurgated us to come on board. The sailors opened the hold where our baggage had been placed among the corn, and finding the Gras rifles and the Greek sabres that Ellis had bought from the Arnauts, they got very excited and plunged their sword-bayonets into



the corn in every direction, hoping to find other prizes. I sent my passport for the Greek officers to inspect, and said I was a member of Parliament. In vain did Ellis and Elia urge me to go on board the gunboat, as resistance was hopeless. I refused to leave the caique except by force. At last the captain of the *Peneius*—it was a curious coincidence that the gunboat which captured us bore the same name as the river over which the bridge was broken—gave me his “word of honour that he would give us every facility in his power to continue our journey to Salonica,” if we came on board. After repeating his promise aloud, *ipsissimis verbis*, that there might be no mistake, we entered the *Peneius*’ galley and mounted the ladder of the gunboat itself. The lieutenant of the gangway wanted me to remove my revolver, but I declined to do so, and wore it till we left Volo in the *Ionia*. The captain received us with courtesy. He was a fine, weather-beaten sailor of the old school, by name Miaolis, a grandson of the famous Greek Admiral Miaolis of the war of independence, and the friend of Lord Byron. Captain Miaolis expressed his great regret for our stoppage, and excused himself on the ground that he was under orders from his

superior officer to pursue and seize the caique, and to stop everything from proceeding along the coast. He had chairs placed for us on the quarter-deck and sent us glasses of cognac, his only luxury.

The *Peneius* then steamed rapidly back to Tsaghesi with our caique in tow. There we were taken on board the third vessel, the principal of the three, a large corvette, called the *Mikali*, and commanded by Captain Condouriotis, an *aide-de-camp* of the King. Captain Condouriotis was exceedingly civil, apologised profusely for our stoppage, and said he had no idea we were on board the caique. There was, indeed, no attempt on the part of either Captain Miaolis or Captain Condouriotis to treat us as prisoners. Captain Condouriotis expressed his regret that he could not, owing to the state of war, send us, as I expressly asked, to Platamona or Salonica. I explained to both officers that we were returning home with all speed, and that urgent affairs required my presence in London as soon as possible. Captain Condouriotis suggested that my best course would be to go to Volo, where we should find steamers of all kinds to take us wherever we pleased. He offered to send us to Volo in the *Peneius*, an

offer which I accepted, as there was nothing else to be done. No doubt the extreme politeness of the Greek officers, and their anxiety to facilitate our journey, were somewhat assumed. We were sent by them to Volo to escape responsibility, as the shirking of responsibility is a crying weakness of all Greek officials, both political and military. It was not till we got to Volo, and Admiral Stamatelos came upon the scene, that there was any pretence made of our being prisoners.

The *Peneius* started for Volo about one o'clock. After an hour and a half's journey we met a large cruiser under the command of Prince George. To our surprise the *Peneius* turned round and steamed back to Tsaghesi in the wake of the cruiser. We protested; but the captain said he had been ordered by signal to follow, and had no alternative.

At Tsaghesi Prince George came on board, and Captain Miaolis presented us to him. The Prince was very polite and expressed great regret at the interruption of our journey. He said the orders were to stop everything, and not to let even a fly pass. The Prince advised us that it was much better to go to Volo, whence we could resumé our journey, and find steamers

to every part. He asked Ellis if he had seen any fighting, and was interested when the boy replied that he had seen three battles. I said we had been most anxious to see the big battle at Valestinos, but had been forced by urgent business to leave Thessaly before it began. Prince George replied laughingly, "Oh, Volo is just the place for you to go to, if you wish to see the battle. There you can have every facility for seeing it from the Greek side." He speaks English well. Prince George is a very fine and handsome man, tall, fair, and powerful. He has a most frank, sailor-like, and agreeable manner. Altogether His Royal Highness would have made a typical Viking in the olden time. We were much impressed both with his appearance and manner. So far as we could judge, Prince George was popular in the Greek navy. His elder brother, Prince Constantine, was certainly not popular with the army.

The *Peneius* then restarted for Volo, and this time pursued her journey without interruption. The captain was very attentive. We dined with him, and he insisted upon Ellis having his cabin. I slept in his saloon just outside the cabin door, and took the precaution of hanging my coat, with my private letters and Edhem's

letter of commendation, inside the door. We both lay with our pistols ready, and I did not undress beyond taking off my boots and coat. To this care is due the escape of my letters from the fate that we discovered afterwards befell Ellis's diary. Our baggage was all left on deck, and during the night it must have been ransacked, and Ellis's diary carefully read through by a spy who understood English. We believe him to have been a dark, evil-looking civilian who appeared the next day, and who scowled at us. He was described by the Greek officers as an Armenian, but this I cannot affirm. The captain had said there was no one on board who understood English, and he only spoke very little French himself. Perhaps it is not fair to blame the captain for this, as most stratagems are fair in war.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## OUR CAPTURE AND THE ADMIRAL.

WHEN travelling in Southern Europe or the East, there is no habit so useful or so refreshing as that of early rising—the earlier the better. It enables you to utilize the whole of the daylight. It gives you the freshest and most delightful hours of the day for enjoying nature and art in a clear and inspiring atmosphere. It spares you much of the overpowering heat, dust, and fatigue, which work of any kind in the midday hours entails. I was rarely in bed after 4.30 during my recent tour, and I enjoyed the benefit of early rising in every way. . . :

At five o'clock on Wednesday, May 6th, I was on deck, and found we were fast entering the bay of Volo. It is a splendid harbour, and the town, or rather group of towns, is exceedingly picturesque. The two older divisions of the town stretch up the hillsides nearly to the top in Oriental confusion and varied grace. The more modern town fringes the north-western shore of the bay, is well-built

and bright, and has a number of handsome villas. The harbour was full of Greek warships, including two powerful ironclads, several cruisers and torpedo boats. There were also a large Italian battleship (the *Sardegna*), a French cruiser, and an English gunboat, the *Dryad*, on which latter we cast many longing glances during the weary day that followed. At 6.30 A.M. Captain Miaolis went on board the Admiral's ship, the ironclad *Psara*, and I asked him to demand of the Admiral that we should either be placed on board the English man-of-war or handed over to the British Consul on shore, whose flag we could see flying from the Consulate. I also asked Captain Miaolis to send a letter from me to the British Consul, but this he declined to do. A long and tedious interval followed before Captain Miaolis' return. During this time several civilians came on board, one of them an agent of the Ethnike Hetairia. He had a forbidding aspect, and denounced us vigorously to the officers. So we were told confidentially by the second officer of the *Peneius*, who was very friendly, as also was the doctor, a volunteer and a very fine young man. It was past nine before our captain returned. He was accompanied by the Flag-captain of the Admiral's ship, who

spoke English fluently, and told me that he had orders to take us ashore and to hand us over to the civil authorities at Volo. This was, of course, another instance of that constant endeavour to shirk responsibility which marks most Greek officials. I asked who these authorities were, and was told that the chief was the Prefect of Larissa, who had taken refuge at Volo and was in charge there.

I knew the evil character for corruption and cowardice, as well as for cruelty, borne by most of the Greek civil authorities. The Prefect of Larissa was no exception to the rule. He had left his duties at Larissa in a most craven manner, two days before the arrival of the Turks, first opening the gaols and giving rifles to the prisoners. These *mauvais sujets* had joined the scum of the army, and during the interregnum had plundered and maltreated the Greek townspeople, especially the women, to such an extent that the Greeks welcomed the arrival of the Turkish authorities, who protected them.

Knowing these facts, I absolutely declined to go on shore, except under force, and demanded to be handed over either to the British man-of-war or to the British Consul. Captain Miaolis



refused, pleading his orders. I then demanded to see the Admiral myself, and after considerable hesitation, Captain Miaolis consented to signal my wish to the flagship. The Admiral's assent was received, and at eleven o'clock we were taken on board the flagship *Psara*. The Admiral, Stamatelos, received us in his saloon with politeness, though he was evidently by nature suspicious, and more inclined to regard us as dangerous enemies than were the other officers we had met. Admiral Stamatelos, a tall, dark man, with a grizzled moustache, a nervous manner, and a rapidly glancing eye, did not seem at all at ease when engaged in conversation. He offered us refreshment, and we explained fully the circumstances that had led us to Tsaghesi and brought about our capture. I told him that we declined to be handed over to the civil authorities, whom we did not know, and in whom we had no confidence. The Admiral and his flag-captain and another officer present made a show of resenting the imputation upon the Greek civil authorities.

But I adhered resolutely to my view. I said that the Greek naval authorities had captured us, interrupted our journey, and brought us to Volo, and that we knew them and felt safe in

their hands. This way of putting the case was not ungrateful to the Admiral. He reflected a moment, and said that if we refused to be given up to the civil authorities, he would decline to take the responsibility of releasing us, but would telegraph to Athens for instructions. We learned afterwards that the Prefect of Larissa was very sore at the comments in the English press upon his precipitate flight from that town, that he and the leading Greeks of Volo were in mortal terror of the approaching Turkish army, and were anxious to have us in their possession as quasi hostages. Certain it is that we should not have had a good time if we had gone on shore, where all was panic and confusion. The extremely disagreeable experiences of other Englishmen at Volo have since been published, and show how ignorant and cowardly a Greek mob and Greek civil authorities can be. The Admiral also promised to send a special messenger with my note to the British Consul and to allow me to telegraph to the British Minister at Athens. This I did through Mr. Merlin, requesting Mr. Egerton to demand our release, and giving a brief but clear account of our capture.

We spent nearly two hours on the *Psara*

waiting for the Consul, and during this time the Admiral had a reception of the captains of his men-of-war. He said it was his own name-day, that of St. George. We heard afterwards, however, that it was the King's name-day, and that the celebration had been suddenly countermanded by orders from Athens. Why, was then a mystery. The sailors, however, kept the day all the same, only it was officially put down to the Admiral's birthday. Several of the officers came and talked to us; one particularly pleasant captain, who spoke English well, took much interest in Ellis and gave him chocolates; unfortunately I have forgotten his name.

At length, about one o'clock, Mr. Merlin, the British Consul, arrived, and did everything that Consul or man could do to obtain our release and to help us. Nothing, however, would move the Admiral, who got more obstinate as the Consul became more pressing. Mr. Merlin actually went so far as to offer to give the Admiral his written *parole d'honneur* that if he let us proceed at once on our journey, I would return, whenever called upon by the Greek Government, to answer any charge they might bring against me. Had the Admiral been reasonable, he would have accepted so fair an

offer; but it was clear that he did not mean to take the responsibility of releasing us on any terms. As a Greek captain subsequently said to me, "All our officials fear the people," which really meant the mob of Athens. Mr. Merlin then left, after exhausting every effort for our release. He promised to telegraph at once to the British Minister at Athens, and to come on board later on to see how we were getting on.

We asked the Admiral to allow us to go to Velestinos to see the great battle that was raging there, barely ten miles from Volo; but he declined. Not the least of the annoyances on this day, when first we were treated as prisoners, was to hear the heavy booming of the cannon and the steady fusillades of musketry that all day came rolling down the wind from Velestinos. It was truly tantalising to have to listen to all the sounds of a big battle, one that we had specially wished to see, and not to be able to witness the contest. It was clear from the constant and tremendous cannonade, from the incessant roll of the rifle firing, both of which seemed quite close, that a very heavy fight was raging about the positions we knew so well. The Turks were making a desperate effort to overwhelm Colonel Smolenski, and to retrieve

Naim Pasha's defeat, which we had witnessed on the preceding Friday.

Mr. Merlin told us that Captain Pelham, of the *Dryad*, had gone out that morning with several English correspondents to see the battle; so he begged the Lieutenant of the *Dryad*, Mr. Hamilton, who came to see us and was very kind, to ask his captain to come on board the *Ionia* on his return and tell us all about the fight.

\* The heavy firing, which began about 10.30, died away towards five o'clock. The Greeks had been receiving triumphant bulletins all day. Finally there came Smolenski's famous brag-gadocio despatch—that he had completely repulsed “seven distinct Turkish attacks, and that his soldiers were swimming in Turkish blood.” Smolenski is a good soldier, the only Greek leader who distinguished himself during the war, but he was much bitten by the terrible Hellenic craze for exaggeration.

I confess to having had some serious misgivings as to the result of the Turkish attack, for we knew the extreme strength of the Greek positions at Velestinos, the reckless courage of the Turkish soldiers, and the incapacity of some of the Turkish generals. However, at seven, we

were relieved by a visit from Captain Pelham. He came on board the *Ionia*, straight from the fight, weary and covered with dust. The captain gave us a graphic description of the battle and of the courage of the Turkish soldiers. They started from Gherli, seven miles away, about 8.30 A.M., line upon line, battalion upon battalion, without any attempt at concealment, and after two hours' march, came into action at eleven. How well we recognised the whole story—the late start, the long tiring march before the fight, and the desperate battle begun in the hottest and most exhausting part of the day. The bulk of the troops should have been brought close to the enemy in the cool of the preceding day. The battle should have been joined at daybreak instead of at midday. It was Turkish generalship all over.

This time, however, Naim's error of trying to storm the impregnable slopes of Pelion was not repeated. The Turkish attack was entirely directed against the Greek left and centre. Captain Pelham had been for some time in the Greek advanced trenches, and had been fairly driven out by the hotness of the fire. He said the Turks were making great efforts to turn the Greek left by getting along the slopes of Cynosce-

phalæ and the high ground, south-west of Vales-tinos. Nor did he take at all a gloomy view of the Turkish position. It was true, he said, that the Greek main positions were still intact, but the Turks had captured the advanced trenches and got very close up to the main line, and would probably make a final and successful attack the next morning. While he was speaking, a fresh fusillade broke out and raged furiously for half an hour.

The gallant captain's estimate of the position turned out to be correct. The next evening Smolenski found it expedient to retreat twenty-five miles south to Halmyros, though it is not quite clear whether this retreat was due to the capture of Pharsalos by the Turks, or to the danger of his own left wing being turned and driven in. Perhaps both reasons had weight; at any rate, the battle was one of the severest of the war and not discreditable to the Greeks. They were entrenched up to their necks, it is true; but Smolenski chose his positions well and thoroughly fortified them. The Turks lost some 1500 men *hors de combat* in the two days' fighting. None of this loss need have been incurred, nor the loss at Pharsalos, nor the heavy loss at Domokos, had the Greek panic at Larissa been promptly

and vigorously followed up. The Greek army ought never to have been given time to reform and regain confidence on the Valestinos-Pharsalos-Trikkala line after the headlong flight from Tournavos and Larissa. Inability to follow up a victory and to complete a triumph by turning defeat into rout was the ruin of Turkey in 1877. Against a braver enemy, it might have borne disastrous fruit in 1897.

About four o'clock a curious episode occurred. The Greek Admiral sent his English-speaking Flag-captain to inform us that he had received orders from the ministry at Athens to send us to Athens. The *Peneius* was ordered to take us, but Captain Miaolis protested that he had insufficient coal; so the large transport *Ionia* was ordered to get ready to convey us to Athens. Captain Miaolis' reasons were, perhaps, of a different kind, as will appear presently, and were connected with the midnight overhauling of our baggage, of which he may have been ashamed.

The *Ionia* was a fine vessel of some 3000 tons, well fitted out, and we were given comfortable cabins, with orders to the captain to show us every consideration. On board the *Ionia* all the arms were taken from us; and though there was no actual confinement, and we had the free



run of the fine quarter-deck and saloon, it was evident that our movements were carefully watched. At night there was a sentry outside my cabin window.

The Flag-captain summoned us into the saloon, where we underwent a sort of formal interrogation. Fortunately Mr. Merlin was on board, and I insisted upon his being present. In somewhat peremptory tones the Flag-captain put a list of questions to me. He read from a paper, which I understood then to be a telegram of instructions from Athens; but afterwards it proved to be the famous "incriminating document" alleged to have been found upon us, of which the Athens newspapers made so much. First he asked me to produce my "log" and my papers. I gave him my passport, and replied that I had no "log" or diary even. This he seemed inclined to doubt, but on my reiterating the denial in stern tones, he turned to Ellis and said, "You have a log; where is it?" This somewhat alarmed me, as I knew Ellis kept a diary, and expressed his opinions rather freely in it. These opinions were sure to be very unfavourable to Greek valour and generalship, and equally friendly to the Turks.

To my relief, Ellis said it had not been

written up for a fortnight—that is, since our arrival in Thessaly. I told him to fetch it, and wrote out a daily statement of our movements since we had left Salonica on April 20th, and gave it to the Flag-captain. He then wished to know if I had not lately been to Constantinople, to which I replied, "Not since early in January;" and also if I bore despatches for the Turkish Government, to which I replied in the negative. The captain then read out from his paper a ridiculous *pot-pourri* about the Sultan, a Pasha and a carriage, Count Goluchowski, and some little anecdotes which sounded as if they had been taken from a child's letter. I thought possibly one of Ellis's brother's letters had fallen into Greek hands at Volo. The Flag-captain then put some perfunctory questions to Ellis, and we showed him that the last entry in Ellis's diary was dated Vienna, April 18th, and had some reference to the visit to Count Goluchowski. This closed the interrogation, and the captain departed not much wiser than when he came. He informed us that he had orders to telegraph our departure to Athens. The Flag-captain had a considerable veneer of frankness and good manners about him, but showed once or twice that he could easily be tyrannical and offensive.

This was the painful experience afterwards of Mr. Montgomery, the able correspondent of the *Standard*, who, being captured by the Greeks near Halmýros, was taken on board the *Psara* and catechised by the same officer in a very disagreeable manner.

But *à la guerre, comme à la guerre*, as everybody said in Thessaly and at Athens, till we were well sick of the phrase. I make no complaint of the treatment we experienced from our Greek captors. It was on board the *Ionía* that Captain Pelham and Mr. Hamilton came to see us, and Mr. Merlin paid us a farewell visit at 7.30, to say that he had not yet received any reply to his telegram to Mr. Egerton. Captain Mavromichalis was a good-natured, well-meaning man, who treated us with unvarying kindness; but he spoke no English and very little French. The second officer and the doctor were also very pleasant and kind; the latter spoke French fluently. There was a Greek cook on board who had been a servant on board the ill-fated *Victoria*. He saw her go down, being engaged on another vessel at the time, and described in graphic terms the horrible effect of the revolving screws upon the hapless sailors that came within their reach.

At dinner we had an amusing conversation with the Greek naval officers and a Greek deputy who had been in the army and was returning home to attend to his political duties. His name was Petalas, and he sat for the historic island of Ithaca, which he pronounced "Etak." M. Petalas was most kind and considerate, and seemed to take a genuine interest in our fate. One of the officers asked me if I had seen any Turkish atrocities, and proceeded to affirm that the Turks had burned the Greek wounded alive in several places. I at once expressed my disbelief of this charge, and requested him to name the places where it had been done.

He mentioned Tournavos, to which I was able to say that we entered Tournavos with the Turkish *avant garde*, and that nothing of the kind had occurred. He then asserted that the Greek wounded had been left in the Church of Rizomylou, opposite Valestinos, and that the Church, with all the wounded in it, had been set on fire and burned by the Turks. I said nothing, but pressed for details, first premising that it was most "necessary to be exceedingly exact and accurate in bringing such charges, and that bogus atrocities did more harm than good to those who alleged them."

“Did you see the church burnt yourself?” I demanded; “and on what day was the burning?” At first he repeated that he had seen it himself; but on being further pressed by me, and on receiving a warning glance from the Deputy, he said that a friend of his, in whose word he had perfect credence, had seen it. The day that the church was burnt, he added, was the previous Friday, April 30th, when Naim Pasha had occupied Rizomylou and attacked Valestinos. Again I impressed upon him the necessity for perfect accuracy; but the officer stoutly adhered to his statement. I then told him that he was entirely mistaken, that we had been in Rizomylou and in the church itself on Friday, up to the very end of the battle, and that there were no wounded there, and that the church was not burnt. I added that we had also been in Rizomylou on Sunday, with a reconnaissance, and that the church was still unburnt, and that there were no wounded in it.

Upon this my interrogator appeared to reflect and said, “What day did you last see Rizomylou?” I replied, “Sunday, May 2.” He then said, “Oh, I made a mistake! The church at Rizomylou was not burnt on Friday; it was burnt on the following Monday.” “Are

you quite sure?" I replied; "it is necessary to be very exact." "Quite sure," he answered. "Very well," I said, "your information must be wholly wrong, because Rizomyloû and the church were in the hands of your own army, the Greeks, from Sunday night till Wednesday morning, May 5th."

This finished off my atrocity-mongering friend. He was discredited even in the judgment of his very credulous comrades, and I heard no more of Turkish atrocities during the voyage, or indeed in Greece at all. The King told me expressly that he did not believe the popular stories of barbarities committed by the Turks in Thessaly.

I was up very early on Thursday morning in order to see the famous Chalkidike Bridge, where the mainland is so close to the island of Eubœa, only eighty-five feet, that the two are connected by a strong swinging bridge; this was opened to let the *Ionia* pass through. Chalkis, with its fine Venetian battlements and turrets, we left behind us at 5 A.M., and about 7.30 passed the immortal field of Marathon, where B.C. 490, 10,000 Greeks under Miltiades routed some 100,000 Persians. The view of the little plain of Marathon, and the valleys of Vrana and

Marathon, beyond, is very distinct from the sea. Reading our 'Murray,' we could trace the various points of the battle, and see the well-known mound called the Soros, where lie the Athenian dead.

The village of Marathon, too, opened out clearly at the head of the right-hand valley. The beach itself, where a bloody struggle took place between the flying Persians and the victorious Athenians, who were striving to detain the Persian galleys, and so prevent their escape, lay close before us. Here the Athenian Polemarch Callimachus was killed, and an heroic Athenian named Cynægeirus allowed his hand to be cut off by a Persian battle-axe rather than relinquish his grip of a Persian vessel. The Persians lost some 7000 men, the Athenians only 192.

The thoughts awakened by Marathon made a very sharp comparison with the valour and self-sacrifice of the present Greeks.

Such 'is the aspect of this shore ;  
 'Tis Greece, but living Greece no more.  
 So coldly sweet, so deadly fair,  
 'We start, for soul is wanting there.

But then the Athenians of that day had not to deal with Turks. The Persians at their climacteric were a much softer race than the indomitable Ottoman peasants.

The country all along the Eubœan coast, and also on the opposite mainland, is very rich and beautiful, far greener and fresher than the Attic hills, which are mostly parched and desolate. The sea was everywhere the most glorious azure; the sky as cloudless, and the air as bright and clear, as the imagination could picture or desire.

There were crowds of people along the passage where the straits grow so narrow. They cheered as our sailors shouted to them the news of Smolenski's "glorious victory"; but the *Ionians* did not stop. There were two Greek irregulars on board, big active men, clad in the Greek kilt, which is quilted and sticks out all round, like a short skirt over a crinoline; they also wore gaiters and grey fezzes, and were covered with bandoliers of cartridges. Over all they had immense coarse sheepskin cloaks. These gentlemen were rare braggarts; they swaggered about as they liked, and even slept in the afternoon on the quarter-deck. One of them said he had himself killed twenty Turks up in the Nezeros district, and was now going home to Athens to rest for a few days. My own belief is that he did not care to face the Turkish bayonets. He was an *Ethnike Hetairia* man.



About 12.30 we came in sight of Phalerum, the little town and harbour outside the bay of the Piræus. There was anchored in silent majesty a squadron of the allied fleets, ready in case a revolution broke out at Athens, but out of sight of the city.

It was two o'clock as we anchored in the harbour of the Piræus, close to the fine American first-class cruiser *San Francisco*, a powerful and handsome specimen of her class. The second officer came on board during the afternoon with the Admiral's card for our captain. I had some talk with him, and he promised that we should not be friendless if the mob tried to play any tricks with our vessel and ourselves. There was no British man-of-war in the harbour.

The friendly Greek deputy warned us that it would not be safe for us to go on shore, as the populace had been incited and excited against us, by articles in the Athens papers. These amiable journalists had described us as "spies," and had said that "compromising documents" were found upon us. The mob a few days before had boarded some merchant ships, supposed to have food for the Cretan Mussulmans, had knocked the crews about, and

thrown the provisions into the water. Later on, Mr. Montgomery, *The Standard* correspondent, met with very rough usage from this same mob.

Our captain at once went on shore to go to Athens and report to M. Rhallys; who is not only Premier, but also Minister of Marine.

also took a despatch from me for Mr. Egerton, and sent a note to the British Consul asking him to come and see us. However, the captain on landing received a telephone message from Athens to say that M. Rhallys was coming down himself at 4.30 to escort us to Athens. This was cheering, but 4.30 came and passed, and there was no M. Rhallys. At 5.30 we asked the captain and officers why they thought the delay had occurred, and after some hesitation they replied, as the deputy had already said, that the mob was dangerous.

At 6 Mr. Maxse came on board from Mr. Egerton. He was really Consul at the Piræus, but was acting as attaché at the Legation during the great press of work. Mr. Maxse brought the welcome news that M. Rhallys had seen the Minister, and that he had promised to release us and hand us over to the British Legation. Mr. Maxse had driven down in a carriage from

Athens to see that all was right, and asked permission to take us off there and then. To this the captain demurred, saying he could not let us go without express orders. Mr. Maxse's skill and tact drove the unfortunate captain into a perfect corner. He hesitated to refuse openly the pressing demands for our immediate deliverance, but temporized and wavered, until at length Mr. Maxse said definitely, "Am I to understand, sir, that you refuse to deliver up to me, as representing the British Minister, the persons of Sir Ellis Ashmead Bartlett and his son?" He then demanded a categorical answer, "yes" or "no." Finally the captain, who was really a good-natured man, most reluctantly stammered out a refusal, and thereupon Mr. Maxse repeated his refusal verbatim, and went off triumphantly to "constater" the fact with an air of victorious decision, which could not have been bettered if he had held the whole British Empire ready at his back. At seven o'clock the captain had a message to say M. Rhallys would not come till later, as our landing by daylight was deemed perilous.

A number of the red-shirted and red-capped Garibaldian volunteers were rowing about the harbour, visiting the different ships, but their

welcome was not very warm. Some of them were letting off their rifles in the harbour. While we were waiting for M. Rhallys, a big merchant steamer arrived, crowded with Hellenic volunteers for the war. These came from Ottoman territory, mostly from Smyrna. They were nearly all mere lads, and were thronging the masts, tops, and bowsprit of the vessel as well as the decks and bulwarks. It was pitiful to hear these poor, ignorant, and weak-bodied boys shouting "Ζητῶ ὁ πόλεμος" as their boat steamed into the harbour of the Piræus. How little conception they had of what war means!

More weary hours went slowly by. We had a melancholy dinner, the officers being evidently even more depressed than we were at the delay, and not liking the responsibility of having us on board. We told them half in fun that if there was any danger they were bound to restore our arms, so that we might defend ourselves if attacked. The captain promised that the store-room, where they were kept, should be unlocked. At length a stir outside the saloon, where we were having our coffee, announced some arrival, and the Greek deputy rose to his feet and said in a joyful tone, "Here is M. Rhallys," just as the long expected Premier entered the room.

M. Rhallys is a small, clean-shaven, active man, with a clean-cut face, a very bright and restless eye and manner, and long dishevelled hair. M. Rhallys is always on the move; and he speaks very fluently in a rapid monotone. His appearance is agreeable but not impressive. I should be inclined to trust M. Rhallys more than most of the Greeks we met. He had only a clerk with him, and a little odd-looking man, who kept in the background, and whom we did not notice at first. M. Rhallys at once shook hands in a cheery way; said he was sorry we had been detained, and expressed his regret for any inconveniences it had caused us. He saluted Ellis with well-meant familiarity by seizing his throat under the chin and chucking him several times with some force. This was deeply resented by the boy, who grew scarlet with anger, and seemed about to use physical force. I said quickly, "He means well," and Ellis subsided; but M. Rhallys had a rather narrow escape.

Then the Prime Minister was button-holed by M. Petalas, the deputy, who was a Delyanfite, but seemed not unwilling to make his peace with the new Premier. Afterwards M. Rhallys and I had a little conversation, in which I expressed my great desire to see the war

ended and a satisfactory peace concluded. The war I described as stupid and injurious to both countries, which ought to be friends and not enemies. M. Rhallys said that he thought there would be much opposition both from Russia and Germany to any settlement that would be satisfactory. He feared my good intentions were rather late to be effectual, as the great Powers had themselves just offered *une médiation spontanée*. He was evidently anxious that it should not be thought that Greece had herself appealed to the Powers. There was little doubt, however, that though there may not have then been a formal appeal on the part of Greece, there had been private and informal appeals for European intervention. M. Rhallys was wrong in his facts as to the war being over; it continued for a fortnight after we met on board the *Ionian* on May 6th. The bloody battle of Domokos was not fought till May 17th.

I assured the Greek Premier that it would give me much satisfaction to do anything in my power, at Constantinople or elsewhere, to further the cause of peace, for which he seemed grateful. M. Rhallys told us that the Greeks had abandoned Pharsalos, a very significant announcement, for it meant the abandonment of

Valestinos as well. Then we all got ready to leave. I asked for the restoration of our arms, which M. Rhallys at once directed should be given back to us. When, however, we requested that the Gras rifles and Greek sabres, which Ellis had bought from the Arnauts in Thessaly, should be returned to us, and also Elia's weapons (a sword, pistol, and knife), M. Rhallys declined to let us have the former, because, he said, they had been the property of the Greek Government. He claimed the right to recapture them.

I disputed this, as we were not combatants, and the weapons had been fairly purchased by us from the Arnauts, who had found them abandoned, in fact as *feræ naturæ*. M. Rhallys would, I believe, have given these weapons also back to us, had we been alone, but he did not like to do so before all the ship's officers, who were watching the scene with interest and perhaps with some irritation. I did not wish to delay our departure from the *Ionia*, and closed the argument by saying, "Well, M. Rhallys, as you have been so good as to come to visit us here, I will not press the matter now, but will defer any further claim till to-morrow."

## CHAPTER XIV.

## AT THE PIRÆUS AND ATHENS.

DIRECTLY we got on shore there was a considerable crowd waiting for us, although it was nearly ten o'clock. We drove to the station, and found a larger crowd there. M. Rhallys was evidently very nervous, for the crowd, though not actively hostile, was clearly critical and might easily become violent. By ill-luck a mistake had been made as to the time, and there was half-an-hour to wait before the train started. The station-master took us into his own room and shut the door, but the crowd increased, and several people came in to have a good look at us. Then the door was locked, but the eager populace of the Piræus clambered up on the railings outside the window to see the novel sight. 'Elia's fez especially attracted them.' For the first time during the whole campaign Elia's heart sank. He had borne up against his capture and against the chaff of the Greek sailors on board the transport, who had challenged him to fight, but



now his weapons were gone, he was in a strange country, a prisoner and defenceless. He sighed deeply and seemed likely to faint. Ellis first noticed his anxiety, and going up to Elia, he patted him on the back and assured him that his Colt repeater was good for at least ten of the mob. Then M. Rhallys also stroked him on the cheek and encouraged him, and I promised Elia that we would defend him.

Soon the train was announced, and we went out. The crowd surged around, but did not attack us. M. Rhallys shook hands with a great number of them, and this gratified the people and kept them quiet. Elia had quite recovered himself and strode along with an air of dignified indifference. We were all hurried into a compartment, the door was locked, and off we went to Athens. At Athens there was another crowd, but not so large nor so demonstrative. A tipsy Scotchman from Australia came up to me and expressed his sorrow and sympathy for me in moving tones. He seemed to think that we were being led off to execution. There was a carriage ready, and M. Rhallys drove us direct to the Legation. It was after eleven before we arrived. The Legation is a fine building in the Greek style, with a very large central hall and

marble staircase leading to the principal apartments on the first floor. The Minister, Mr. Egerton, an able and agreeable gentleman, whose knowledge and tact are equally conspicuous, received us half way up the stairs.

There were a few moments of hesitation ; M. Rhallys did not quite know what to say, while Mr. Egerton regarded him and us with an air of dignified surprise and regret, as much as to invite M. Rhallys for an explanation. The Greek Premier recovered himself and said in a genial manner, " M. le Ministre, je vous rends mes prisonniers sains et saufs," and said " Good-bye " to us and the Minister. Mr. Egerton then greeted us cordially, said he had expected us to dinner, and invited us to stay with him at the Legation. Under the circumstances we had no hesitation in accepting his hospitality. We found Sir D. Mackenzie Wallace of the *Times* there, who had his own experiences to relate. He had been in the Greek panic flight into and out of Larissa on April 23rd and 24th, and like many others had been somewhat disillusioned as to Hellenic valour.

At five the next morning I was up and on my way to the Acropolis, which I had not seen for nineteen years. What a glorious place it is ! How the mind revels in the memories of its past,

and how the eye delights in the inimitable grace of its relics!—the Parthenon, the Propylæa, the Erechtheium and the Temple of Nike Apteros. I went to the gentle eminence of the Areopagus, where St. Paul moved the Athenians over 1800 years ago, and then entered the rock-dungeon where Socrates breathed his last. Close by was the famous Hill of the Pnyx, so replete with memories of Pericles and Cleon and Demosthenes, and all the famous Athenians of the glorious age of Attic greatness. Compared with them, how small the modern Greek appears!

As Mark<sup>o</sup> Antony says:—

‘Oh, what a fall was there, my countrymen!

Or as the great Cardinal laments:—

And when he falls he falls like Lucifer—never to rise again!

Greece indeed needs a hero to save her from the fate her reckless and cowardly folly has invited.

Oh, God! for a man with heart, head, hand,  
Like one of the simple, great ones, gone

For ever and ever byes

A still, strong man, in a blatant land!

Whatever they call him, what care I—

Aristocrat, autocrat, democrat—one

Who can rule, and dare not lie!

After breakfast I paid M. Rhallys a visit at his own bureau in the Ministry of Marine. The reason I gave was that "as he had been so good as to pay us a visit on board the ship, I felt bound to return his attention." This seemed to please M. Rhallys's fancy, and he was friendly and bright. His private room was a sight for gods and men, and made me marvel how a Greek Minister can do any business at all. It was crowded with all sorts and conditions of men—officers, journalists, petitioners, politicians, secretaries, even ladies. Among all of these, M. Rhallys was rushing about, saying a few sentences to each, being buttonholed first by this, now by that eager visitor, trying to do his duty to all and neglect none. It was a wonderful performance; I was told this scene went on all day, and it was not till the late hours of the night and the early hours of the morning that M. Rhallys got any chance of working alone and in quiet.

A handsome Greek lady came in to inquire about her brother, who was an officer and in the war. She spoke English well, and M. Rhallys introduced me to her with one of the gallant phrases that come so readily to the Greek tongue. We were soon engaged in a long but

pleasant argument about the war and its causes, in which I tried to disagree as little as possible with my fair disputant.

Before leaving I made a formal but good-natured appeal to M. Rhallys to restore Ellis's rifles and sabres and Elia's weapons. He promised to return Elia's arms, and to give the other question favourable consideration. We did not, however, receive any of our weapons, possibly because of our early departure from Athens. That afternoon we saw the correspondents of the *Times* and *Standard*, Mr. Bouchier and Mr. Fairman, both agreeable and well-informed gentlemen. I was also told that the curious little stranger who came with M. Rhallys on board the transport was the correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*. This correspondent afterwards wrote a series of amusing little fictions regarding our interview, and generally played the useful part of journalistic *âme damnée* to the Greek Premier.

We drove about Athens for several hours, seeing all we could and enjoying to the full the delightful mementos of ancient Greece, and the matchless atmosphere and sky. The streets were full of all kinds of nationalities, volunteers and irregulars, none of them particularly attrac-

tive or reassuring in appearance. In fact, Athens was at that time the receptacle for the scum of Europe. The majority were Garibaldians, or rather raw lads, of from sixteen to twenty-one, in the red shirt and cap that were so famous forty years ago. Many of them had revolvers, and all wandered listlessly and aimlessly about, anxious only to be admired. A good many of the *soi-disant* Garibaldians were Greeks, wearing the Italian dress for swagger. At night masses of these irregulars collected in the chief square and sang and shouted till late. Some of them fired off their pistols, and they were a source of much anxiety and alarm to the Greek authorities.

## CHAPTER XV.

## THE KING OF GREECE.

ON Saturday morning at 10.30 the King's *aide-de-camp* sent a letter, asking me to come to the palace immediately to see His Majesty. We arrived at the palace at 11.10, and I was presented by the king's *aide-de-camp* to His Majesty. The King received me with much kindness, and at once began a most interesting and lively conversation. His Majesty is of good height, about five feet ten inches, slight in build, and has a very frank and agreeable manner. There is a strong family likeness to his sister, the Princess of Wales. He speaks English with much ease and rapidity, and was rarely at a loss for a word or an idiom. My excuse for not having suitable clothes for the royal audience—that it was due to the activity of His Majesty's ships of war—much amused the King.

His Majesty spoke with extraordinary freedom and fluency upon all the political questions of the moment. He was very severe upon the action of the Powers, saying that the six Great

Powers had combined against the little kingdom of Greece, and had politically counterworked and actively opposed every action taken by Greece. He stated that the mistaken action of the Great Powers had directly caused the war. His Majesty was particularly indignant with the policy of the British Government, saying that they had one policy at one moment and an opposite policy the next. At one time last year the British Government was favourable to Greece, now it appeared hostile to every Greek claim.

On my saying that my own chief and constant aim was to keep Russia out of Constantinople, the King replied, "Yes, but the policy of your Government is doing everything to put Russia into Constantinople, and as quickly as possible. England will regret it when too late. England ought to support Greece, which is the one non-Slav people in the south-east of Europe." To this I answered that I was most anxious to see the war ended at once, that Greece and Turkey should be friends instead of cutting each other's throats, and that I was very friendly to the Turks, but by no means an enemy of Greece. The King replied, "That was my policy, too, some years ago. I am not at all unfriendly to the Turks. I did all in my power then to persuade



the Sultan that it was necessary for us to be close friends, but he would not listen to me. The Sultan would do nothing without the approval of Russia, and Russia wishes to see Greece crushed and humiliated. Turkey and Greece are now enfeebling each other by the war, and Russia and the Slavs alone will gain."

I told His Majesty that these were exactly my sentiments, and that I thought the policy the British Government had been in many respects uncertain and weak, but not deliberately hostile to Greece. The Turkish Government had received great provocation from the invasion of Macedonia made by the Greek irregulars before the war. The King fully admitted this. He said, "The Sultan certainly had provocation, but we could not prevent the raids; the invaders were not regular troops. It was inevitable that they should go, in order to get experience of what war means, and they will certainly never try it again." I could not help smiling at this somewhat eccentric view of governmental responsibility. It illustrated the truth of what has been apparent from the first: that the Athens populace, now as of old, controls Athenian and Greek policy, and that every official, from the King and Ministers downwards, is afraid of the excitable, ignorant

and fickle mob. It is clear that the war was really brought about by the real or imaginary need of appeasing popular clamour for aggrandisement. The mob of Athens is just the same unpractical, frenzied and changeable influence for evil that it was two thousand years ago in the wars with Sparta, and in the deadly peril from Philip of Macedonia when the Athenians refused to listen to the warnings of Demosthenes. The Greek populace of Athens in 1897 is as mad and as mischievous as the Greek populace of Constantinople in the fifteenth century, when the Turks thundered at their gates.

The King then said, "The situation in Crete was absolutely impossible for us. We have 15,000 Cretan refugees homeless and starving. I cannot endure any longer the sight of these suffering people. We have these constant revolutions in Crete, which cause so much excitement and trouble here. Something had to be done for Crete." I then pointed out that the Cretan Christians had greatly maltreated their Mussulman neighbours, and that the latter were now all refugees in the sea-coast towns. His Majesty said that the crisis in Crete was caused by the blunders of the Great Powers. "The reforms granted by the Sultan in August, 1896, supported

by the Powers, were very satisfactory, much more so even than the Greek people had hoped for, but their execution was delayed by the mistakes and disagreements amongst the Powers."

(His Majesty evidently overlooked the dispatch of 15,000 rifles and several hundred agitators from Greece to Crete in the latter months of 1896.)

The King then said with much vehemence, "The Great Powers do exactly as they please. Austria takes Bosnia and Herzegovina because there was a little insurrection in Herzegovina. Russia takes Bessarabia, Kars and Batoum. England goes to Egypt and stays there and occupies Cyprus. France occupies Tunis under the slightest of pretexts and keeps it. Even the Prince of Bulgaria marched as he willed into Eastern Roumelia, accompanied by the British Consul, captured the Turkish Pasha and still keeps the country. Whereas, if a poor little country like Greece moves to defend its own people in Crete, immediately the six Great Powers combine and are down upon Greece."

"This argument of course was unanswerable. It reminded me of the old proverb, "One man may steal a horse, while another may not look over the hedge." I then said to His Majesty

that the situation was most unfortunate and regrettable; the war, however, was a *fait accompli*, and my object was to find a way out of the impasse, and to secure a satisfactory peace, and I proceeded to lay my plan for a settlement before the King. This plan in almost all its details met with His Majesty's approval, and in some points his cordial approval, so it may be summarised here.

(1.) The payment by Greece of a considerable sum to Turkey for the expenses of the war, at least £4,000,000. This sum to be charged on the revenues of Crete, if that island became Greek. The King said there would be no difficulty whatever about this, and seemed greatly pleased with the suggestion. I then asked His Majesty whether Greece would consent to a rectification of the Thessalian frontier, so as to leave all the hill-tops in Turkish hands. This would prevent future incursion by irregulars or others into Turkish territory. His Majesty said he thought the Greek people would not accept this rectification, as it would leave Thessaly at the mercy of the Turks, and would be contrary to the Treaty of Berlin. I pointed out that there was not the slightest danger of Turkey attacking Greece, that the

Sultan and his Government "greatly dreaded war, as the Ottoman Empire was so surrounded by enemies.

(2.) Crete. This should be transferred by Turkey to Greece now or in a brief period, provided that Greece could and would give satisfactory guarantees for the lives and property of the Mussulman inhabitants. This His Majesty at once said could be most satisfactorily done. He gave as a proof the good treatment received by the Mussulmans of Thessaly at the hands of the Greek Government (this I believe to be true). I suggested the planting of the Cretan Mussulmans in one corner of the island, and the maintenance of a European guard for some period. The King said that this was not in the least necessary, as the lives and fortunes of the Mussulmans would be perfectly safe under the Greek Government.

(4.) A defensive alliance between Turkey and Greece, especially in the event of any foreign Power threatening Constantinople. His Majesty said he had always been in favour of close relations with Turkey, but for the present, in view of the rancour caused by the war, such an alliance was hardly possible. The King added that of course he could not speak decidedly on

such a question, which his Ministers would have to settle. "The most important thing," His Majesty said, "is to spare Greece all possible humiliation."

I then recapitulated the points, and said the great difficulty was the mode of settling the treaty, in view of the hostility of some of the Great Powers to Greece, and of the resolute opposition of Russia to the cession of Crete to Greece. In this view the King entirely agreed, and spoke very severely of Russian hostility to Greece. To a suggestion of mine that His Majesty should immediately and privately come to terms with the Sultan, that these terms should then be submitted to the British Government, and if approved by them should be proposed by England to the other Great Powers, as coming from England, His Majesty assented.

I then said that if opposition came from the Great Powers, especially from Russia and Germany, that Germany might be won over. The King thought Germany hostile to Greece, and that it would be very difficult to settle with Germany. I explained that in my opinion the German Emperor was extremely particular as to international legality and justice—as we had found His Majesty regarding the Jameson raid ;

that, indeed, the German Emperor was almost a martinet on these subjects, and that he was generally in the right. Of course the invasion of Crete by Vassos was illegal. Hence the Emperor's indignation. But if Colonel Vassos and his troops were withdrawn, and the Sultan, the lawful sovereign of Crete, accepted the terms of peace, then the German Emperor, if judiciously treated, would probably give his consent to such a settlement as that sketched by me.

It must be borne in mind that the King of Greece assented to my proposals as a whole, and not to each item separately. Thus it would not be just to assume that His Majesty agreed to the payment of a large war indemnity apart from the acquisition of Crete by Greece. The cession of Crete also would have enabled him to accept a rectification of the Thessalian frontier. I then asked His Majesty if I was at liberty to communicate his views to the Sultan, as it was my intention to go to Constantinople to see the Sultan, and to do my best to promote a fair and honourable peace between the two countries. The King replied, "Certainly, you are free to repeat what I have said to the Sultan, or to anyone you wish." Before leaving, the King made several inquiries of Ellis as to his experi-

ences, saying, "I hope you have not shot any Greeks." To this Ellis very suitably replied, "Sir, I am a non-combatant." We heard afterwards that a general idea prevailed among the Greeks that we had been doing a little irregular fighting on our own account, a practice very common on the Greek side. Ellis's excellent Colt repeating-rifle, which all the Greeks who saw it vastly admired, probably gave some colour to this impression; there was of course no real ground for it.

While my audience with the King was proceeding, His Majesty's *aide-de-camp* was regaling Ellis with blood-curdling tales of Turkish atrocities—"killing and burning alive the wounded, desecrating churches," etc., etc.; but the boy knew the truth too well to be moved. What struck me most about the King's views, as indeed about those of all the Greeks whom I met, was the extreme suspicion and even hatred felt towards Russia. It lent colour to the opinion held by many that the Greek Government had been secretly encouraged by Russia before the war, and then abandoned afterwards. This would also explain what is otherwise the unredeemed madness of Greece in beginning so hopeless a conflict.



## CHAPTER XVI.

## CONSTANTINOPLE.

AFTER my interview with the King of Greece, I determined to go direct to Constantinople to obtain an audience of the Sultan and to convey to his Ottoman Majesty the King's views.

We left Athens by the Italian steamer for Constantinople on Saturday afternoon, after receiving the utmost kindness from our hospitable Minister, Mr. Egerton. Mr. Leveson-Gower and Mr. Maxse were also very kind to us. Elia came with us. He was advised not to wear his fez in leaving the Piræus, as the mob there is unruly. So he borrowed a wideawake of the Legation porter, in which he seemed very ill at ease. Although M. Rhallys had said that Elia, being in the Turkish service, was a lawful prisoner, he had not pressed the point. We interceded strongly for Elia as being a dragoman and a faithful attendant, and the Greek premier did not prevent his coming to the Legation with us. Once there Elia was safe. He spent two days

with us at the Legation, was very well treated; and he said that he never fared so well in his life. We might almost have said the same, for the Minister has an admirable cuisine.

We had excellent quarters on board the steamer. There were very few passengers, and Elia donned his fez and uniform as soon as we were out of Greek waters, and he became quite a hero among the Italian officers and crew. He looked quite three inches taller in his uniform than in the unbecoming mufti in which he came on board.

We had a glorious passage across the blue Ægean Sea, passing many of the islands which the Greek fleet was blamed for not capturing. Those we saw had but few signs of life, and did not look as if they would repay capture. Ellis had a good deal of practice with his Colt rifle on board the steamer. The captain and the officers and several young Greek students tried their hand at oranges, bottles, and bits of bread, which were tied to a string and suspended over the stern sheets, at fifty yards distance. Some wonderful practice, in spite of the rolling of the vessel, was made, especially by a young Greek, who had been to Larissa, and by Ellis. The latter won the match, and was regarded by the

Italians as a marvellous shot. The young Greek was also very good. He spoke English, and had been trained at Robert College. I rather think he had been doing a little filibustering up in Thessaly, but finding his countrymen unsatisfactory, was returning to Constantinople.

We reached the Dardanelles at noon on Sunday, and steamed very slowly through the famous Straits. They are certainly well fortified, and literally bristle with cannon. Great Krupp guns stretch their long muzzles from every coign of vantage, and smaller cannon peep from innumerable embrasures all along the slopes and ridges that fringe the Dardanelles. It would be almost impossible to force this historic passage that connects the Ægean with the Sea of Marmora, and that bars the approach to Constantinople from the south. An English statesman of eminence told me in January, 1897, that, according to the best English naval opinion, the Dardanelles might be forced, but that it would cost half the fleet, which undertook the task. Unless the Turkish shooting was very bad, I doubt if four out of twelve first-class battle-ships would get through. It is fortunate indeed that Sir Philip Currie's plan for a rush upon Constantinople, in the autumn of 1895, was not

put into action. I understand that it was very near being tried.

Here, for the first time, the Turkish fleet was visible. It was anchored inside the Dardanelles in two detachments—the first at Geulez; the second and larger squadron at Chanak-Kilesi. The battleships were of the very old type, big, long, broadside vessels, like our *Hercules* and *Neptune*. They looked formidable enough, and seemed smart and trim, though their armour is thin, their engines old, and their guns almost obsolete. However, there is good material in the ships, and fifteen or twenty years ago they would have held their own. They might even now, if repaired, re-engined, and re-armed, be made into fair second-class battleships. What struck us most about them was the immense number of sailors and marines on board. Their decks were simply swarming with neatly-dressed men in fezzes, who were being actively drilled. I was assured by competent judges at Constantinople that marvellous seamanship was shown in bringing these old weather-beaten and almost unmachined ironclads out of the crowded Golden Horn and through the tremendous current that swirls round the Seraglio Point. No tugs or merchant steamers were used to help these vener-

able warriors from their twenty years' berthing. Only one ironclad just touched the bridge as it passed through. This was made much of by the cynical correspondents at Constantinople, most of whom are always ready to turn and hoist anything they can to the ridicule of the Turk, as this treatment is supposed to be grateful to the home news market. As a matter of fact, the Turkish sailors did remarkably well in getting these obsolete leviathans out of the Golden Horn without any accident. The Turks have always shown the capacity for making good sailors. At Navarino they fought magnificently against four nations and heavy odds, most of the crews perishing with their ships. On the Danube in 1877, the Turkish gunboats did exceedingly well. If ever they meet the Greeks by sea on anything like fair terms, the Turkish sailors will do as well as their soldier comrades did in Thessaly.

We reached Constantinople at dawn on Monday, May 10th, just seven days after our departure from Larissa. It had been a most exciting and instructive week, and we had crammed a great deal of experience into a very brief space. Nothing could have been finer than the first vision of Constantinople as we

saw it on that May morning. The sun was just rising and tinting the horizon with golden lines of light. The fair island of Prinkipo with its attendant islets lay on our right. Behind and beyond the Prince's Islands stretched the blue hills of Asia Minor, Olympus and his satellites, that rise around Broussa and fringe the eastern shore of the Sea of Marmora. In front of us rose the minarets and towers and all the graceful and picturesque shapes of Stamboul that delight the eye. The Bosphorus looked like a deep dark gully—the shining villas and buildings of Scutari, with its cypress groves and memories of our gallant dead, on the right side, Stamboul and Pera on the left. Here Europe and Asia meet. Here is the most glorious position in the whole world for arms, for commerce, for political power. The queen of cities, the key of two continents, the prize for which great nations have striven for century after century, lay before us. Words cannot paint the beauty and the magnificence of that matchless sight. No one who has not seen it can imagine its charm and its glories. Those who have seen Constantinople can realise why empires fight for it, and what its possession may signify to the conqueror

and its loss to the vanquished. As we drew nearer, we saw the full extent of the sea front, that runs in an almost unbroken line of buildings from the Bosphorus to San Stefano. We saw the old walls, still in their ruins so massive and grand, the famous seven towers, and the exquisite mosque of Sultan Achmet, which with its inimitable six minarets is far more striking in external effect than Saint Sofia. Then gliding steadily forward, we passed into the Bosphorus itself and swept along the splendid eastern front of Stamboul, with the Porte, the Seraskeriate, the domes and minarets of the Mosques, and the exquisite Bagdad Kiosque close under our eyes. All the glories of the Bosphorus burst upon our delighted gaze, the marble palaces lining the water's edge, the hill-sides of Asia and Europe dotted with beautiful villas and castles, the crowning heights of Pera topped by the watch-tower of Galata. Then the Golden Horn came into sight, with its throng of shipping, its crowded bridge, and the caiques, with their picturesque boatmen and their veiled ladies, dashing in every direction. The Seraglio Point alone, with its ancient palace rising on the slope in picturesque confusion, and its background of domes and minarets and towers, is one

of the most lovely and inspiring spectacles that Nature and art can offer to the human eye. I wish every Englishman, who may be so blind or rash as to consent to let Russia get control of Constantinople, could see its beauty, its strength, and its unequalled possibilities for military, naval, and political power.

The immense importance and the matchless position of Constantinople render the fate of Turkey vital to the nations of Europe, and more than all to England as a great Eastern Empire. There has been a good deal of reckless and ignorant talk about our giving Russia Constantinople, and so settling the Eastern Question. Such a policy would not settle the Eastern Question, but would only place in Russian hands an impregnable position, and an irresistible weapon for dominating the Mediterranean and the whole East. It would be the old policy of the Danégelt, which only whetted the appetite of the enemy and led to ever-increasing demands.

Constantinople is the greatest strategical and commercial position in the world, the queen of cities, the key of two continents. It is of unequalled value as a military and naval stronghold. For one thousand years the impregnable strength of Constantinople kept the Eastern



Empire alive after Rome itself had fallen. The great Napoleon said that a first-class European Power holding Constantinople would be mistress of the world.

Russia, in possession of Constantinople and of the Straits, could build a navy there of any size she chose; she could sail forth into the Mediterranean at any time she chose, and hold our Mediterranean fleet, our Mediterranean commerce, Egypt and the Suez Canal at her mercy. Already the six Russian battleships in the Black Sea, if they could pass the Straits and join the seventeen French battleships in the Mediterranean, would overmatch our Mediterranean fleet of twelve battleships. What would be our chances if Russia had twenty battleships massed in the impregnable stronghold of Constantinople? Russia has already decided to spend very large sums in augmenting her fleet during the next ten years.

Besides this, the possession of the Turkish capital would give Russia control of the whole fighting forces of the Ottoman Empire, the most courageous and tenacious warriors in the whole world. How long should we be able to hold India, after Russia had dominated the Mediterranean, had added 750,000 Ottoman

Turks to her already almost countless legions, and had got control of the head of the Mussulman religion, the Caliph of the Mahometans? There are over sixty millions of Mahometans in India, the bravest and the most stalwart of Her Majesty's subjects. . What would be the effect upon them and upon the Amir of Afghanistan if Constantinople were abandoned to the Czar? The risk is so tremendous, the dangers are so certain and so terrible, that none but the most ignorant or the most fanatically blind could suggest a Russian occupation of Constantinople.

It is difficult to understand how any self-respecting member of the House of Commons could get up in his place and say that the cause of our failure to defend the Armenians was the action of the Russian Government, and then in the next breath affirm that we ought to bribe Russia to go in and take Armenia by offering her a port on the Mediterranean. Yet this was actually said in the House of Commons in 1896. This inconsistency is so extraordinary that it passes the imagination to understand how any one can be capable of it. Many of our Anglo-Armenian agitators and of the representatives of the Nonconformist conscience recklessly urged

Her Majesty's Government to invite Russia to occupy and police the quasi-Armenian vilayets. That is to say, they urged that the very same crushing and cruel despotism which has so long and so pertinaciously opposed effective reform in Turkey, and which prevented pressure being put upon the Sultan, should be invited by England to undertake the very task which Russia herself so successfully baffled. Our Anglo-Armenian fanatics have practically tried to reward Russia for all the delays she deliberately caused, for all the loss of life and miseries her impediments promoted, by placing Russia in occupation of these Turkish provinces. Was there ever such inconsistency—it might almost be said such hypocrisy—as this?

## CHAPTER XVII.

## THE SULTAN, HIS CHARACTER AND COURT.

THE truth about the Sultan's nature and conduct is as nearly as possible the reverse of what has become so widely believed in England. The Sultan is far from being the deliberate author of massacres, as he has been unjustly and recklessly painted; nor is he a craven and pitiless tyrant. As a matter of fact, the Sultan is a very capable and shrewd diplomatist, a ruler of great experience, and most ready to show kindness and consideration to others. The Sultan has had to contend with difficulties almost unparalleled. He has been worried by nearly the whole of Europe, and yet has come out victorious. In private His Majesty is eminently kind-hearted and very fond of his children and his friends, and he is most solicitous for the well-being and comfort of his troops, especially of the private soldiers. The Sultan has carefully tended and pensioned the horribly mutilated Turkish soldiers who were

the victims of Montenegrin ferocity in 1876. The new hospital buildings which the Sultan has erected at Yildiz itself for over 1000 wounded soldiers are models of cleanliness and perfect arrangement, where the injured victims of the war recover with amazing rapidity.

The Sultan's difficulties are, and have always been, enormous and almost crushing. He found his country in 1877 and 1878 ruined by the Russian invasion. One million innocent Turkish non-combatants, mostly helpless women and children, besides 250,000 Ottoman fighting men, had perished from the war. With merciless barbarity the Mussulman inhabitants were massacred, outraged, and chased out of Bulgaria and Roumelia. The treachery and incapacity which were proved against some of his leading advisers, and which undoubtedly did so much to frustrate the valour of the Turkish soldier and to ruin the Empire, made a profound impression upon the sensitive mind of the Sultan. His own brother-in-law, Mahmoud Damat, had been convicted of gross treachery; Suleiman and other leading Pashas were strongly suspected. Turkey was all but ruined, and the sufferings of the Mussulman population were awful. This

led the Sultan to take the direct administration of his Empire more in his own hands: a step which, though there was much excuse for it, has weakened the capable governing class of the Ottoman Empire.

The Ottoman Empire is a perfect mosaic of diverse races, religions and interests. An archangel could not rule it peacefully. England finds one Ireland almost too much for her long experience and highly civilised powers of administration. Turkey has a dozen Irelands to manage. There are Greeks; Bulgarians, Wallachs, Armenians (three kinds of Armenians), all hating each worse than they hate the Turk, who keeps the peace between them. Already the numerous Wallachs of Thessaly are petitioning against a return to Greek rule, and Bulgars and Hellenes regard each other with furious aversion. Remove the Turks from Macedonia to-morrow, and Greek, Wallach, and Bulgar would be at each other's throats in a week. There are Kurds, Zaibecks, Arnauts, Druses, Syrians of many sorts, Lazes, Jews, Ethiopians, Arabs, and Circassians. Besides these and many other tribes, there is at Constantinople and in other large cities a motley horde of mongrel Levantines and

Europeans. The idea of governing such a heterogeneous medley by Western European methods is impracticable and ridiculous. Russia keeps her wild and alien subjects in order by methods which are infinitely more despotic and thorough, and even more cruel and barbarous than those of the Turk.

The Armenian massacres were not deliberately planned and carried out, as has been so often represented. They were the result of long-growing tension and a conspiracy of three years. They were the outcome of five causes: (1) An Armenian revolutionary conspiracy, hatched on Russian soil, and encouraged and paid for by Russian agents. This was accompanied by many outrages on isolated Mussulmans, deliberate and intended to provoke reprisals.\* (2) The Armenian *émeute* at Constantinople on September 30, 1895, when the Turkish Police Commander and twenty of his men were shot. This outrage was encouraged by English agitation and sympathy, and had an electrical effect all over the Ottoman Empire. (3) Sham atrocity-mongering in England, and

\* References to this conspiracy and the plan of the Armenian conspirators, notably of the Hintchakists, will be found in Appendices II and III.

wholesale vilification of the Sultan, the Turkish people, and the Mussulman religion, based on false stories regarding Sassun. This atrocity campaign in England was well known in Turkey. It greatly agitated and irritated Mussulman feeling and sadly diminished British influence.

(4) Sir Philip Currie's rash scheme of so-called reforms, which was wholly impracticable and would have placed the dominant and proud Mussulman element under Christian administration in Asia Minor. (5) There was also the attempt made by Lord Rosebery's ministry, under Sir Philip Currie's advice, to join Russia and France in coercing Turkey. This unwise attempt at co-operation with the traditional and irreconcilable rivals of England, and with the bitter foe of Turkey, very naturally caused great suspicion and apprehension to be felt among the Mussulmans of Turkey. Nor was the feeling lessened by Lord Salisbury's speeches of August and November, 1895, delivered in the House of Lords and at Brighton. These unfortunate facts all greatly excited the religious spirit and national pride of the Mahometan majority, and led to the terrible scenes of October, November, and December, 1895, which all deplore.

Sir Philip Currie estimates the numbers of



Armenians that perished at some 25,000, and his estimate is not likely to be under the mark. The Turkish official view is that not more than 5,000 to 10,000 Armenians were killed in Asia Minor. Undoubtedly in many places massacre and pillage were altogether prevented by the courage and timely action of good Turkish Governors. This humane conduct is wholly overlooked by our atrocity-mongers. The truth is that when once the passions of murder and plunder were let loose in the wild regions of Asia Minor, the fate of the Armenians in a town or district depended largely upon the character or capacity of the local governor. If he was a brave and good man—and in the majority of cases disturbances were checked—the Armenian population was protected. If he was a bad or a weak man, the mob had their way. The following was in most cases the course of the evil. A band of wild Kurds or Lazes or Circassians would rush down upon a town or village. These would be joined by the scum of the local Mussulmans. There would be a tumult, and then the killing and looting would begin. The Mudir or Kaimakam or Mutessarif, in civil authority, would find himself, with a few soldiers and fewer police, face to face with a large and ferocious mob. If he

were brave and humane, he might be equal to the crisis ; if he were craven or cruel, he would fail. In many cases the Turkish authorities were willing and able to prevent outrage. They did check the disturbance, and were rewarded by the Sultan. Very rarely did the real Turks, the Ottomans, have anything to do with these barbarities, and still more rarely were the Turkish regular soldiers in any way concerned.

Then comes the obvious question, Why were not the authorities who failed to do their duty, and who permitted massacre and rapine, punished for their *laches*, or worse ? This can only be understood from a consideration of the very peculiar and difficult circumstances of the Ottoman Empire. That empire is based upon Mussulman ascendancy, just as our dominion in India, and to a great extent that in Ireland, is based upon English ascendancy. The Sultan's power depends upon the loyalty and vigour of his Mahometan subjects. It is most difficult, it is almost impossible for a government to fly in the face of the strong opinion and prejudices of its dominant race and religion. Even in highly-civilised countries this is the case. Although Major Lothaire committed a most cold-blooded murder in hanging Mr. Stokes, he was acquitted

by a Belgian High Court, and has never been punished. The American filibusters, caught red-handed in trying to invade Cuba, have just been acquitted by American courts. The terrible deeds of massacre and outrage committed upon the negroes in the Southern States by the white conspiracy, known as the Ku-Klux-Khan, were not punished. These were parallel cases in civilised communities, and were due to the determined prejudice of dominant races.

The Sultan and the Turkish Government are dependent upon the support of the Mussulman element for their power, even for their very existence. It is contrary to human nature to expect the Mussulmans of Asia Minor, who are in a large majority, to resign their ascendancy without a struggle. The Mussulmans had been greatly excited by the Armenian conspiracy and outrages, by Sir Philip Currie's reform scheme, by the anti-Turkish crusade in England, and by English combination with Russia and France. The Armenian *émeute* at Constantinople on September 30th, 1895, set the spark to the tinder. These facts by no means justify the terrible reprisals upon the Armenians, but they go to explain the cause of the dark deeds in Asia Minor.

Yildiz Palace is of moderate size, and unpretentious in its exterior; but what Yildiz wants in external magnificence, it gains in the salubrity and convenience of its position, and in the size and beauty of its lovely gardens and grounds, which slope down to the exquisite shores of the Bosphorus. Just at the foot of the Yildiz grounds is the beautiful marble palace where lives the ex-Sultan Mourad, the Sultan's elder brother. But for his severe mental infirmity, Mourad would have been sovereign of Turkey. The Sultan has two other brothers living, Reschid, and a younger one, both of whom are in good health. Close to Yildiz Palace are the new hospital buildings, just erected by the Sultan for his wounded soldiers, where they recover so fast as to amaze the surgeons. But the average Turk is marvellously healthy and hardy. He never drinks wine or alcohol, lives on a most frugal diet, and recovers with ease from wounds that would be fatal to most Europeans.

So soon as we reached the entrance to Yildiz, my son and I were at once taken into the Kiosque, and not kept waiting in one of the Chamberlain's rooms at the entrance, as is very usual, even with ambassadors. Visitors to Yildiz are always ushered through the central hall,

where there are many attendants in plain clothes, silent and watchful, with noiseless shoes, through an ante-room into a third room, where Munir Pasha receives them.

Munir Pasha is an indispensable officer of the Court. He is Grand Master of Ceremonies, and principal introducer and translator to His Majesty. In fact, he holds the position of Lord Chamberlain at the English Court, but with more influence. Chamberlains and high officials rise and fall, come and disappear, but Munir Pasha remains; and he well deserves to remain, for he is the embodiment of courtesy and discretion, a courtier of much *bonhomie* and of charming manners. He received us with great cordiality. Coffee and cigarettes were brought, and Munir listened with the deepest interest to the narrative of what we had seen and done. I learned for the first time that Nedjib Bey, a most promising young officer, whom I had been much with at the front, was a nephew of Munir Pasha.

According to Professor W. M. Ramsay in his "Impressions of Turkey," who calls the Sultan "the Mithridates of the nineteenth century," the inroads of Western influence upon Turkey have been checked by

the Mohammedan revival, carefully engineered from the Palace by that remarkable man the present Sultan, who alone did not despair of the State, but, with marvellous patience and hard work and diplomatic skill, set himself to strive against fate . . . and has for twenty years faced the torrent in his shattered and hardly seaworthy bark, kept her head up stream, and made astonishing way. . . . [strong] in the moral power that resolute purpose and religious fervour give against selfish or blundering adversaries.

The Sultan's view was that the safety of Turkey and the authority of the sovereign were threatened by the machinations of a greedy and ambitious group of Pashas. Desiring to raise his country out of the ruin and ashes into which the Russian invasion of 1877 had plunged it, the Sultan, believing in himself and doubtful of his Pashas, decided to concentrate all power in his own hands, to choose his own instruments, and to effect the regeneration of his country in his own way. Moreover, external pressure also inclined the young Sultan in 1877 to absolutist ways. It was at the demand of the Russian Ambassador that Midhat's promising Parliament was abolished, for the Russian despotism would never brook a constitutional government in Turkey. The Sultan may have been mistaken as to the aims of the Pashas who had dethroned and murdered his predecessor. He may have

adopted methods not in accordance with European ideas or morality, but that the Sultan has succeeded in his principal aim none can doubt. Turkey has risen from the ashes of 1878. Turkey is stronger than she has been for fifty years. The Sultan and Turkey have rallied round themselves the Mussulman sentiment of the world.

The Turks have revived their military organisation and their fighting prestige. They have warded off the attacks of their jealous and ever encroaching neighbours, and have parried with marvellous skill the elaborate and menacing intrigues of their colossal and traditional foe, "the Divine Figure from the North." The alliance of Turkey is sought for by great nations, and she holds the balance of power in Europe and the East. This is what the Sultan has done, and it has won for him, in spite of every conspiracy and opposition, internal and external, the gratitude and support of the great majority of the Ottoman people.

The popular idea as to the *entourage* of the Sultan is that it consists of a number of rogues and miscreants, capable of any amount of cruelty and corruption. Nothing could be further from the truth. There may be evil-

mind<sup>e</sup>d and evil-act<sup>i</sup>ng men within the precincts of Yildiz, as there are at most Courts. But, on the other hand, the Sultan's immediate surroundings contain many most trustworthy and agreeable high-toned gentlemen—men of ability, honour, and kindness. The high character of Munir Pasha, the Lord Chamberlain and Translator to His Majesty, is well known. Munir is an accomplished, loyal, and good-hearted official, whom every one likes and trusts. Tahsin Bey, the Sultan's Chief Private Secretary, is also universally respected and is very popular. Arif Bey, at present the favourite Chamberlain of the Sultan, is a man who would be appreciated at any Court. He is frank, upright, clever and amiable, and may be trusted not to abuse the great opportunities which the Sultan's confidence in him must afford. Emin Bey, another Chamberlain, and one very friendly to British influence, is also a worthy and estimable official. Even the much-abused Iazet, who has many bad things said of him, and who, perhaps, deserves some of them, is very industrious, a past master of detail, and therefore most useful to his Imperial master. I mention these facts because it has become so much the custom of Constantinople correspondents to level



gibes and abuse at the Palace officials, and so much the fashion here to believe every *gobemouche* story that is circulated, that it is necessary to make even these elementary facts public.

After about half an hour word was brought that the Sultan was ready to receive us, and we were taken to the large and most exquisitely decorated saloon on the opposite side of the entrance hall, where the Sultan receives his visitors. The room itself is about 40ft. by 35ft. and lofty, the floor is parquet, and the walls are hung with beautiful tapestry. His Majesty stood just inside the saloon, greeted us both warmly, and shook hands.

The Sultan's appearance by no means justifies the pictures and representations given in so many English publications. The Padishah is not in the least ferocious or cruel, or even stern to regard. In figure he is somewhat small and delicately made. His expression is mild and kind, and unless appearances are most deceptive, he would not deliberately injure a fly. The nose is long and somewhat curved, the eye bright and very observant, the forehead good and intellectual. His Majesty looked in the best of health and spirits. Indeed, his

improvement in physical health and vivacity between last January and the present time was most marked. His voice is soft and pleasing, and his modulation of tone quick and expressive. The Sultan wears almost European clothes, with long loose frock coat and an embroidered waistcoat. He wore a rich order across the waistcoat.

The Sultan made very particular inquiries after our health, and especially asked about the accident which had happened to my son. His Majesty himself examined the scar of the wound, and was gratified when I informed him that the Turkish Army doctors had dressed the wound with great care, and had been uniformly most kind. This was the fact, and it was also a fact that the Turkish surgeons refused to take any fees for their services. The Turkish surgeons are well trained, and have all the latest surgical appliances. The Sultan informed us that he had once had a severe carriage accident, himself, and had been unconscious for twenty minutes. His Majesty was also anxious to know how we had been treated by the Greeks. I replied that the Greek naval officers, though suspicious, had treated us well; but that M. Rhallys, the Prime Minister, had been afraid to come from Athens to Phœus to release us in the daytime on account

of the mob. I also said that all Greek officials are afraid of the populace, and that there is a general shirking of responsibility on the part of Greek officials (*e.g.*, the Admiral at Volo wished to hand us over to the civil authorities). His Majesty seemed to quite appreciate this fact, and he was much amused at the story of the harmless little extracts copied by stealth from the boy's diary, which were described by the Greeks as "compromising documents." Most of these extracts were old and related to kindness shown to me in January last by the Sultan.

The greatest deference is paid to the Sultan by all his household, and indeed by the highest officers of State. They always make the salaam very low on entering and on leaving the imperial presence. Each time an official is addressed by His Majesty, or addresses him, the salaam is repeated.

I then broached the subject of peace, and strongly urged upon His Majesty the importance both to Turkey and to Greece of bringing the war to a speedy and honourable end. Greece and Turkey should be friends, not enemies, as they had common and formidable foes. A continuance of the war would only enfeeble both and benefit the Slavs. His Majesty observed

that Turkey had not begun the war, and that the Greeks ought to have thought of these things before rashly plunging into war without provocation.

I replied that this was perfectly true, and even the King of Greece had admitted that Turkey had received much provocation. But the Ottoman arms were now quite victorious; the Turks had shown to the world the splendid courage of their troops, and also their admirable discipline and good conduct. His Majesty, therefore, could well afford to display the magnanimity for which he was so distinguished, and grant terms of peace that would not be too humiliating to Greece.

His Majesty observed that I had said that the King of Greece and the Greek Government feared public opinion, but there was a public opinion in Turkey also which had to be reckoned with. Turkish feeling demanded that the Ottoman Empire should not thus be wantonly forced to make heavy sacrifice of blood and treasure with impunity. I assented to the justice of this remark, but urged that it would be a great pity if more blood and treasure were expended. Turkey had more powerful foes than Greece. These foes would be too glad to see

this war continued, in order that the only two anti-Slav Powers of South-Eastern Europe might weaken each other. I alluded to the proposal which finds much favour with all reasonable men, that Turkey might demand a considerable indemnity, in order to cover the heavy expenses of the war which Greece has provoked.

His Majesty seemed gratified, but did not express any opinion upon my suggestion that Turkey might cede Crete to Greece in exchange for Thessaly and an indemnity. I pointed out that Crete under autonomy would be practically useless to Turkey, and that if ample guarantees were given for the protection and good government of the Mussulmans, the cession of Crete might be a relief rather than a loss to Turkey. His Majesty said that the Cretan Mussulmans had been very cruelly and unjustly treated, and that there was much indignation in Turkey on their account. This I also heard from other sources. When some 300 orphaned Mussulman children, whose parents had been murdered by Cretan Christian insurgents, recently arrived in Constantinople, there was a keen competition among the leading Mussulman families for receiving and bringing up these unfortunate children.

I said that Turkey was clearly justified in

claiming such a rectification of the Thessalian frontier as would secure her from future attacks on the part of Greece. There was no likelihood of Turkey attacking Greece; but it was by no means improbable that Greece might again attack Turkey when the Ottoman Empire was in any peril. Turkey should certainly hold the passes and the line of hills, of which Melouna is the centre, as a security against a future aggression. His Majesty assented and wished to know what the Greek Government thought of such a proposal. I replied that, from what I had heard at Athens, I thought it would be difficult, but not impossible, for the Greek Government to accept it.

The Sultan wished to know how the King and Royal Family of Greece stood with their subjects, as there had been reports that a revolution at Athens was imminent. I replied that the position of the Greek Dynasty was less critical than it had been ten days before, and that the fall of M. Delyannis, whose vanity and weakness largely caused the war, had improved the position at Athens. M. Rhallys, the new Greek Premier, was a man of more courage and common sense than his predecessor. The new Greek Ministry

had seized all the documents of the Ethniké Hetairía, and the Greek papers were now denouncing that secret society, formerly so omnipotent in Greece.

I then alluded to the urgent need of an early conclusion of the war and a close alliance between Turkey and Greece under British auspices. The King of Greece had expressed himself as always favourable to a Turkish Alliance before the war. It was better for both that Turkey and Greece should be friends. The King and Government of Greece were both anxious for an honourable peace. The Sultan replied that, while the fault lay with Greece, he too would be glad to see peace re-established. I added that a magnanimous treatment of Greece would have an excellent effect on English public opinion, which had been so unfortunately estranged from Turkey during the past two years. Already public feeling in England was improving towards the Turks. A most favourable impression had been created by the courage of the Turkish soldiers, and by their discipline and self-restraint.

His Majesty said that he greatly regretted the hostile feeling in England, and that he would do a great deal to restore the old friendship between the two countries. Unfortunately, the

conduct of the British Ambassador had not promoted a good understanding. His Majesty gave me many interesting and important details upon this subject, which I cannot publish. To this I replied that in my opinion it was clear that Sir Philip Currie had committed lamentable mistakes, which had been a misfortune both for Turkey and to England; but I hoped that England and British interests would not be permanently prejudiced by the errors of a Minister. . .

Several other subjects were discussed, but I cannot give more details, which might possibly prove an embarrassment in the peace negotiations. I am satisfied that the Sultan is a true friend of peace, and that the final demands of Turkey will be moderate. With a shrewd, bargaining, chaffering, commercial people like the Greeks, it is necessary not to be too easy at first; otherwise the advantages to be gained by Turkey, and to which she is thoroughly entitled, might be excessively reduced.

The above accounts of my interviews with the Sultan and the King of Greece were written in May, long before the terms of peace were agreed upon.



## CHAPTER XVIII.

## CONCLUSION.

AND now the war is over and the terms of peace have been arranged, we can see more clearly with what inconsistency and injustice Turkey is treated by her Christian critics. Barely ten weeks have passed since the war was ended by the victory of Domokos. The negotiations for peace have been complicated and delayed by the fact that they have not been conducted between the two combatants, but that all the six Powers have had their say in the settlement. The conditions agreed to are exceptionally favourable to Greece, and very much less advantageous to Turkey than the Turks had a right to expect. The war was forced upon the Sultan against his will. It was waged by the Turks with the utmost courage and success, and also with moderation and humanity. Yet Turkey has obtained no territorial compensation, contrary to all precedent; and she has been offered an indemnity barely sufficient to cover the cost of this unprovoked war, and a slight modification of the capitulations.

Because the Sultan and his Government have tried, even struggled, to obtain good terms for Turkey, as it was both right and patriotic that they should do, the usual cheap and ignorant abuse and calumnies have been levelled at them by the London Press and by Turcophobe politicians. There has been no unreasonable or excessive delay on the part of the Turkish negotiators. There have been no expedients or no postponements that would not, if used by English diplomacy on behalf of English interests, be deemed both necessary and laudable. Yet our newspaper leaders have been filled with the usual claptrap about Turkish procrastination and Hamidian artifices. The *Times*, acting as the spokesman of the Foreign Office, even went so far as to threaten the Turkish Government with the aggressive activity of the new Russian minister, M. Zinovieff.

Then there was Sir Philip Currie's opening declaration on May 26th, that no territory that had ever been Christian should become "Musliman," or as his friends have since explained, "Turkish." Something similar was said by the Prime Minister. So that we have had a new and startling doctrine laid down, that no matter with whom the right or wrong may be, no matter on

which side has been the aggression, the cruelty, or the injustice, the Mussulman or the Turk is to be denied the advantage which the Christian victor always demands and obtains from the vanquished—some territorial compensation. And this doctrine is laid down by the representatives and rulers of the greatest Mussulman empire in the world; for the Queen rules over nearly 100,000,000 of Mussulman subjects, of whom over 60,000,000 are in India. Upon the loyalty of the Indian Mussulmans we may at any time have to depend for the security of our Indian dominion, in face of the chronic agitation and disaffection of the Hindoos.

The Turkish military power now holds the balance of power in Europe and in Asia. If Germany has secured the Turkish alliance in the event of a war between the German Monarchies and Russia with France, that alliance means victory for the Germans. If Russia were to obtain the alliance of Turkey for an attack upon our Indian Empire, that alliance would mean to England the loss of India.

Hence it is hardly possible to condemn in language of sufficient intensity any needless action or speech that tends to alienate the traditional and necessary ally of England. The present

condition of India makes a policy of needless hostility towards Turkey trebly unfortunate.

Again, could anything offer a greater incitement to the greedy, semi-barbarous, and unscrupulous little States of the Balkan Peninsula, than the public announcement that no territory that has ever been Christian shall become Mussulman or Turkish? It is as good as telling Servia or Montenegro or Bulgaria, "Attack Turkey whenever and however you please; Europe will see that you suffer no loss of territory, however unprovoked and unjust your attack may be."

Is it any wonder, in the face of such downright injustice and direct religious persecution, that the Turkish Government should seek to protect itself by establishing closer ties among the Mussulmans of the world, by stimulating a Mussulman revival, and by strengthening Mussulman solidarity? The Roman Catholics would do the same if the independence of the Pope or their own religion were openly threatened. The Anglican Church all over the world would act in the same way if the Church of England was unjustly menaced.

Formerly a Mussulman revival would have boded no ill to England or to English rule, for

English supremacy always meant justice and friendliness to Mussulmans. The same cannot, alas, be said now. Our great rival in the East never loses an opportunity of provoking, in every possible way, Mussulman fanaticism against this country. The recent outbreaks against British rule along the north-western frontier have not taken place without active foreign stimulus, just as the Chitral outbreak of two years ago was stimulated from outside. These fierce outbreaks among the Mussulman tribes, the extraordinary rumours as to the action of the Amir of Afghanistan are very alarming. The mutterings of a tremendous storm are audible. Heaven grant that its worst perils may be averted.

Let us take another case which may at any time arise. Is this new and most deplorable dictum of British policy to be applied to all non-Christian creeds? Is it, for example, to be applied to Buddhism? The French have recently seized and annexed, very unjustly, large portions of the territory of Siam. Supposing by the turn of the wheel of fortune the Siamese were enabled to reconquer territory that is really theirs, though it may have been French, that is "Christian," for several years, just as Thessaly has been for several years Greek. The French are now

engaged in stamping out Protestantism in Madagascar by persecution and confiscation. Will the British Government lay down the rule that such "Christian" territory is never to become Buddhist or Siamese again?

The mere idea is a *reductio ad absurdum*. If we were driven to defend Ireland against a foreign power that claimed "Home Rule" for the Irish, and if after a victorious campaign we had established the triumph of the British arms, would not every Englishman living uphold a British Government that struggled to the end rather than submit to a foreign combination which sought to deprive us of the fruits of our victories? Yet we revile the Sultan and his Government as anti-human, deceitful and malignant for doing what is, from a Turkish point of view, exactly the same. Their efforts have been dictated by the plain interests of their country and government, and have been justifiable patriotism. The admirable terms in which, in their recent encyclical letter, the Bishops of the Pan-Anglican Synod have referred to Mahometanism should be a lesson to our reckless Turcophobe pressmen and politicians.

For preaching to the Mahomedans very careful preparation is needed. The men who are to do the work must

study their character, their history, and their creed. *The Mahomedans must be approached with the greatest care to do them justice. What is good in their belief must be acknowledged to the full, and used as a foundation on which to build the structure of Christian truth.* They have been most obstinate in opposing the Christian faith, but there seem now to be openings for reaching their consciences. It is easier for them to join us than it was. In India the Christian and the Mahomedan meet on equal terms, and a Mahomedan can become a Christian without danger to his life. It seems as if the time for approaching them had come, and that the call to approach them was made especially on ourselves. To this end it is necessary that we should have the services of men specially trained for the purpose.

The East is the East, and the West is the West. No Oriental country can be governed by strictly European and English methods. Our own campaigns against such ferocious opponents as the mountain tribes of Tochi, of Malakand and of Swat are not conducted with rose water. Nor will the Ottomans ever submit to Christian domination in Asia Minor. When the shrewd and experienced American Minister heard of Sir Philip Currie's 1895 scheme of reforms, by which it was proposed to put representatives of the Christian minority to rule over the Mussulman majority in Asia Minor, Mr. Terrell immediately asked for special protection for the American missions. Why? Because he realised, from the

analogy of the Ku-Klux-Klan after the American civil war, that a proud and dominant race will never submit without violent resistance to being placed under their inferiors. The Ku-Klux-Klan, composed of Southern whites, attacked and murdered many negroes because the negroes had received political equality.

The truth is that all the errors of our Government and of public opinion arise from the influence of atrocity-mongering, which is the curse of modern times. Atrocity-mongering—that is the exaggeration of atrocities and their perverted use in order to further designing ambition or party rancour—is the worst phase of modern political methods. It deprives people of all sense of proportion. By adroit atrocity-mongering the natural sympathy and humanity of the English people have been exploited for the political ambition and aggression of the foreign enemies of England. Thus were the Bulgarian atrocities manufactured and used by Russian agents in 1876-7. That atrocity-mongering cost the lives of over 500,000 gallant fighting men, Turkish and Russian, and of over a million of the innocent Mussulman inhabitants of the Balkan Peninsula. It all but put Russia in possession of Constantinople and the Straits.



The recent atrocity-mongering has alienated Turkey from England, caused the deaths of thousands of Armenians, and led to the war between Turkey and Greece with its losses. It is only by the mercy of the Almighty, and by the wisdom of the German Emperor, that we have escaped a bloody dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, and losses and perils irreparable to the British dominion in the East. The reckless atrocity-monger of the modern British type is the greatest enemy to mankind, the most deadly foe to the cause he patronises, and the most disastrous curse to British interests that the mind of man can construct or conceive.

The most earnest hope of the writer of this work is now, as it has been during the past three years, that the ancient friendship and good understanding between England and Turkey may be restored. That friendship is necessary for both countries. It is necessary for Turkey, surrounded as she is by unscrupulous enemies, to have the support and advice of a highly civilised and disinterested power that has no designs upon her territory or independence. It is necessary for England to have the support of the valiant Ottoman army and of the Caliph of Islam, in the event of an attack either upon our

Indian dominion or upon the Straits and British naval supremacy in the Mediterranean.

This policy of friendship and alliance with the Ottoman Power has the imprimatur of the adhesion of the greatest statesmen of the century, of William Pitt, Lord Palmerston, and of Mr. Disraeli.

• It is based, as has been shown before, upon the eternal necessities of political conditions, of religious influence, and of naval and military strategy. It cannot be avoided or cancelled by any amount of wordy and misconceived sentimentalism. So long as Constantinople and the Straits are of vital importance, so long as India contains many millions of Mussulmans, so long as Russia remains a great military despotism, aggressive and overweening, so long will the alliance of the valiant Ottoman people be essential for England.

While at Constantinople we received much kindness from Admiral Woods Pasha, one of the best and most devoted friends Turkey possesses, and also from Blunt Pasha, a well-known and popular resident. On May 13th we saw, under very favourable conditions, the famous ceremony of the Bairam in the magnificent Dolma-Bagché Palace, •

one of the most imposing spectacles in the world. The Sultan there received the homage of all the great dignitaries of the Empire—military, religious, civil and judicial. Ghazi Osman Pasha held the sacred ribbon, which rests on the Sultan's throne. Each dignitary as he approaches makes the salaam and presses the ribbon to his forehead. We stayed only four days at Constantinople, and returned home on May 14th by the Black Sea and Roumania. The journey across the Black Sea was very fine and enjoyable, and the Roumanian steamer large and well provided. The train service, however, in Roumania, especially between Bucharest and the Hungarian frontier, was bad. On the Black Sea we captured a fine falcon and brought it safely home.

At Bucharest I had a very interesting conversation with Sir G. H. Wyndham, the British Minister, who did excellent service in a critical time at Rio de Janeiro. Roumania seemed in a peaceful and flourishing condition, and the relations with Turkey are most satisfactory. Of all the former provinces of Turkey, Roumania is certainly the most civilised and the most orderly. This is due to the powerful aristocracy and to the intelligent dynasty which Roumania fortunately possesses.

## APPENDIX I.

## GREEK CORRUPTION AND FAVOURITISM.

THE following interesting and remarkable description of the present state of Greek politics, administration and law is from the pen of Mr. E. J. Dillon, an ardent Phil-Hellene, who spent some time in Greece before and during the recent war. It is quoted from an article in the *Contemporary Review* for July, 1897 :—

When a Greek becomes Prime Minister he is the soul of the Government, and virtually the dictator of the kingdom for the time being ; and the time being continues so long as he can satisfy the patriotic craving of his Parliamentary friends to serve their country in salaried posts, and can pull together with the King. Then everything moves smoothly—for the Cabinet ; as for the country at large, there is, of course, a special providence watching over it, as over helpless children and drunken men. Along with the leader come his faithful followers, and their name is legion. They fill up every post of emolument, every place of trust, every position of power or influence, every nook, cranny and crevice in the machine of State. To make room for these saviours of their country, every official and

employee in the kingdom is turned adrift. His services, experience and aptitudes are set at naught; they are but as dust in the balance when compared with the political faith of the Minister's friends. In politics, as in religion, good works without the faith that vivifies are dead, and the good worker may die with them. It is difficult in England, where the administrative machine has an existence independent of the political, to realise the extent of the revolution which is caused whenever a new Ministry comes into power. There is not a postman, a schoolmaster—nay, not even a schoolmistress or scavenger—who is not summarily dismissed to make room for the rival candidates, who have been patiently waiting for years for the moving of the waters. The very judges, who cannot be deprived of their functions without good cause shown, are transferred from place to place, till life becomes a burden to them, and they voluntarily resign; and when other means prove inefficacious, the obnoxious official is pensioned off.

The relations, comrades, acquaintances, and even the servants of the deputies on the right side of the house are the spoiled children of fortune as long as their political day lasts. All things are possible to them. Like constitutional monarchs of the better class, they can do no wrong, or at least none that is punished by the law courts. "Do you mean to say you were not imprisoned, my friend, for that gross libel which you published against X.?" I asked one of my friends, some time ago. "Of course I was not." "But you did publish the libel?" "Oh, yes." "And you admitted it?" "I did." "And how did you escape punishment?" "I went to my friend the Prime Minister, and he told the court to non-suit the private prosecutor. It was not more difficult than that."

The faults of the people whose political faith is orthodox become virtues, their crimes amiable weaknesses, and justice when appealed to against them undoes the bandage on her eyes and becomes transformed into mercy. Their sons are exempted from military service, and their daughters admitted into the schools as teachers. The post and telegraph are at their beck and call, and have no secrets from them, and the custom-house officers would not insult them by examining their luggage. In a word, the taxes are collected for their behoof, the crops are harvested for them, and the very sun seems to shine for their exclusive benefit.

All these people live upon the budget; and not these alone. In peace time there are 21,472 soldiers and 8707 marines, who, though they have little chance of getting properly trained for the duties of their profession, are supported by the country. In addition to these forces there are 17,235 civil servants dependent for their daily bread upon the budget.

But, as we saw, there are as many more out of work, wistfully longing for their turn to come, that is to say, waiting for the opposition party to come into power. From 1880 to 1892, the total production of the nation hardly increased by 50 per cent., whereas the taxes were gradually raised by over 100 per cent.

The administration of the law is equally corrupt. Yet even-handed justice is the corner-stone of the modern state. On its maintenance depend order, confidence, social morality, the finances and prosperity of the country. Foreign capital can never be attracted to a land where Themis, instead of being perfectly blind, ogles the political party in power upon the privileged people of the Palace with a wide-awake eye of benevolence. In an autocracy cases of crying injustice

occasionally occur and are always denounced as intolerable scandals. In the democracy of Greece they unfortunately are not the exception, but the rule, and render life a burden. For as Voltaire happily puts it, if you have to do with a single wild beast, you can manage to keep out of its way ; but you are utterly lost if surrounded by a band of petty hungry tigers who are always getting between your legs.

The entire want of organisation and strategy are thus described by Mr. E. J. Dillon, in the same article in the *Contemporary Review* for July :—

Things were allowed to take their course, or rather their several courses. The ship of State was steered without compass or pilot, and in consecutive accordance with the conflicting commands of half-a-dozen, equally well-meaning commanders. There was no plan of campaign from the very outset, nor at any period during the war. Nobody knew what was to be done or how to do it. The matter had never been seriously considered. The Greek army was in the position of a youth who, having just learned the moves of the different figures on the chess-board and the main object of the game, sits down to try conclusions with a third-rate player. There should, of course, have been one comprehensive plan of campaign, in the execution of which the efforts of the armies of Thessaly and Epirus and of the navy should have been skilfully combined. As a matter of fact there was nothing of the sort. The army of Thessaly acted or remained inactive, just as if there were no Greek troops in Epirus, and the navy went ahead on its own hook without much reference to either of the land armies. Nay, more, there was no unity

of direction, no concentration of command, within these three separate unities of the service.

The spectacle offered by the navy was, if possible, still more bewildering. The Marine Minister, for instance, instructs the Chief of the Squadron to bombard Prevence, which is expected to fall in two hours. The Chief is silent and inactive, for he is said to be awaiting orders from "the other place." However this may be, when the Admiral proceeds to execute the order, his ships fire at the respectful distance of six kilometres, for reasons which still have to be discovered, and with results which need not be described. On April 20th the bombardment of Kara Burnoo is ordered by the Marine Minister; on the 21st it is countermanded by himself; and on the 24th the Chief, Sakhtouris, is told by the same personage to bombard Kara Burnoo, scour the sea for a distance of 140 miles, seize every Turkish transport, and every foreign vessel carrying contraband of war; and prevent the Ottoman fleet from leaving the Dardanelles. He might with propriety have instructed the Admiral to take Constantinople while he was in the vein. On April 25th the same Minister despatched to the same Admiral a remarkable telegraphic message, from which the following is an extract:—"Mark you this: I allow nobody among you to put off the execution of my orders, or to seek for approval of them from any quarter whatever, as you did when you were told to bombard Kara Burnoo. Do not forget, Sir, the circumstances attending your municipal election at Poros, where you ran a great risk and were saved by me. You have now to obey me blindly . . . . ."



## APPENDIX II.

[Referred to on page 51.]

## A COLOSSAL TRAGEDY.

GENERAL SKOBELLEFF, after he crossed the Shipka in January, 1877, found an encampment of nearly a hundred thousand desolate Turkish women and children near Hermanli. His cavalry and artillery fell upon these helpless and defenceless creatures—just as four years later they mowed down twelve thousand Turcoman women and children at Geok Tepé—and drove them through the icy waters of the Maritza into the Rhodope Mountains, where nearly all of the fugitives perished of cold and starvation. In proof of these statements, the following appalling description of the flight of the Turkish people from the ferocity of the Russians and Bulgarians is quoted *verbatim* from the *Daily News*, then a strong Russophile paper, of February 8th, 1878:—

“ [From the *Daily News* war correspondent.] ”

ADRIANOPLE, JAN. 27th, 1878.—*Seventy miles of utter desolation, seventy long miles strewn with the household*

effects of many thousand families, *seventy weary miles of a continuous, ghastly, sickening panorama of death in every form, and in its most terrible aspect; such is the road from Philippopolis to Hermanli.* Here has been enacted a tragedy of such colossal proportions and horrible character that it is quite impossible for anyone who has not witnessed part of it to conceive, in the most moderate degree, the nature of the diabolical drama.

#### FLIGHT OF THE TURKISH PEOPLE.

It was here that was assembled the great mass of the Turkish families that fled from the villages at the approach of the Russians. Fugitives from the entire territory from Plevna to Philippopolis were for weeks, and even months, endeavouring to make their way to Constantinople, the haven safe from the pursuit of the Muscovite. Now, for the first time, do we appreciate in part the sufferings of these people, and form some adequate idea of *the multitude of Mussulman inhabitants who have fled panic-stricken before the Russians.*

#### A SCENE OF DESOLATION.

As we rode from Philippopolis the corpses of peasants were to be seen lying in the snow, and some of them had already been exposed to the weather for two or three weeks. Some had blood stains still fresh on their garments. Hundreds of abandoned arabas stood in the road and choked the ditches alongside. There were traces of bivouacs in the snow, which became more and more frequent as we proceeded, until these side paths were almost literally carpeted with the debris of camps, and our route lay between rows of dead animals, broken arabas, piles of rags and cast-off clothing and human bodies, for thirty-five miles of the whole of the first day's ride. Women and

infants, old men and children, had fallen in the fields by the roadside, half buried in the snow or lying in the pools of water. While many of the bodies bore marks of violence and showed ghastly wounds, the great proportion of the women and children were evidently frozen to death, for they lay on the snow as if asleep, with the flush of life still on their faces, and the pink skins of their feet and hands still unblanched. Side by side with these, many corpses of old men, full of dignity, even in death, lay stark by the roadside, their white beards clotted with blood, and their helpless hands fallen upon their breasts. From the muddy water of the ditches tiny hands and feet stretched, and baby faces, half covered with snow, looked out innocently and peacefully with scarcely a sign of suffering on their features. Frozen at their mothers' breasts, they were thrown down into the snow to lighten the burden of the poor creatures who were struggling along in mortal terror.

EXILED, STARVING, PLUNDERED, MURDERED.

The peasants were travelling in miserable arabas without food or shelter, and with half-starved oxen. Miles of these araba trains we passed on the road, human beings and household effects jumbled in promiscuously. Upon the jolting carts bedding and utensils were piled. Women and children, upon donkeys and cattle, followed alongside, and behind for miles was a long trail of wretched, weary, half-starved stragglers; old men and women bent double, crawling along with the aid of crutches or sticks; mothers with infants at their breasts, scarcely moving one foot before the other, all this after long months of flight, constant exposure, continuous dread of marauders and the hated Muscovites. Never did I feel so utterly helpless as in the presence of this supreme misery. I watched a mother leading along a sick child of perhaps ten years a mile or more behind one of these trains.

The poor girl could, with difficulty balance herself on her naked, half-frozen feet. Night was coming on, and the cold wind that chilled us in our warm clothing blew about the rags from the suffering creature, disclosing emaciated limbs and skeleton body. The mother was in quite as pitiable a condition. A night on the road meant death to both these unfortunates. This was one of a series of similar scenes that were enacted before our eyes.

#### IRREPRESSIBLE SYMPATHY FOR TURKS.

Does it seem strange that at this time, together with an exhausting sense of hopelessness and complete helplessness that took possession of me, came emotions of keen sympathy with the Turks, both soldiers and peasants, as the weaker and losing party? The next morning, just as we were going away from Kurucesme, the head of a long train of returning Turkish refugee families appeared in the main street of the village.

#### BULGARIAN RUFFIANS.

Then followed a scene which is painful in the last degree to describe. The Bulgarians gathered on the side of the street in knots of three or four, and waited calmly until the miserable train had got well into the village, when from every direction the inhabitants pounced upon the exhausted, defenceless Turks, and began to carry off their household effects, and even the cattle from the carts. One poor woman, leading an ass piled up with bedding and a child on top, found her property distributed among half a dozen stalwart ruffians in a twinkling; and the little infant on the ground in the mud. The old men and women clung to their only treasures, while the Bulgarians dragged them away. Children yelled with fright and panic reigned,

which started the slowly moving caravan into a quick march. All this went on before General Gourko was out of sight of the town.

MUTILATED CORPSES EVERYWHERE.

*From this village to Haskioi the corpses were more numerous if anything than on the route of the day before. The village we passed was full of dead Turkish peasants, and on asking the Bulgarians who killed them, they replied with a great deal of effusion and fiendish pride, "We did it; we and our friends did it." In Haskioi there were bodies of Turkish soldiers in the streets nearly buried under heaps of stones and bricks, who, after being wounded and unable to move away, had been stoned to death by the peasants.*

I inquired of one of the Turkish families where they had come from, and they said that they left Plevna five months ago, and since that time they had been on the road, and for the past few weeks in a great camp further on towards Hermanli. For many days they had been entirely without bread or even Indian corn, and had existed solely on the flesh of the cattle that fell on the road. I gave them all the bread I could get hold of, and they eat it like starved creatures, crying for joy. The grandmother, father, and mother, with an infant at the breast, and a small boy of ten years had not a single shoe between them, and their only baggage consisted of a few old torn bed-quilts, and a kettle to boil meat in.

At every step beyond Haskioi we met new and more horrible scenes—man and wife lying side by side on the same blanket, with two children curled up on the snow near, all frozen dead; old men with their heads half cut off, and on each side of the road broad continuous bivouacs deserted in haste, strewn with household effects. For many miles we had been trampling in the mud carpets, bedding,

and clothing. Now the highway was literally paved with bundles, cushions, blankets, and every imaginable article of household use. Broken arabas, too, began to multiply, and as we approached the little village of Terali we saw in the distance, on either side of the road, a perfect forest of wheels, reaching to the river on the right and spreading up the hill sides on the left. We rode into the midst of the great deserted bivouac, the horses walking on rich carpets and soft draperies, all crushed and trampled in the mud.

#### UNIQUE AND UNPARALLELED DISASTER.

The scene was at once so unique in its general aspect, so terribly impressive, so eloquent of suffering and disaster to innocent people, that I hesitate to attempt a description of it. *Hundreds of acres were covered with household goods. All along the river bank reached this bivouac, at least three miles in extent, and of varying width. Over this great tract the arabas were standing as closely as they could, with their oxen placed together. The frames of the carts were in most cases broken to pieces. Sick cattle wandered listlessly about among the wheels. Corpses of men, women, and children lay about near every araba, and the whole ground was carpeted with clothing, kitchen utensils, books, and bedding. It was a pitiable sight to see an old grey-bearded Turk lying with his open Koran beside him, splashed with blood from ghastly gashes in his bared throat. Bundles of rags and clothes nearly all held dead babes. Crowds of Bulgarians swarmed in this great avenue of death and desolation, choosing the best of the carts and carrying away great loads of copper vessels, which lay about in profusion, and mud-soiled bedding, with no more respect for the dead than for the rags they lay on. These scavengers would drive their carts across the heads of dead women and old men without even a glance of curiosity at the bodies.*

I should say that at least 500 dead non-combatants lay in the bivouac; certainly *no less than 15,000 carts had halted there*—large as the number may seem—and *at least 75,000 people had deserted the whole of their possessions and fled with only what they could carry in their hands.* Sickened by the continuation of the ghastly panorama for so many hours, we rode on to Hermanli, not leaving the last of the horrible, mutilated corpses until we reached the very edge of the village.

#### ANNIHILATION OF THE MUSSULMANS.

The cause of the panic was *the appearance of Skobelev's cavalry in the valley of Meritza in front of the bivouac.* The result of it was doubtless the death of thousands upon thousands of Turkish peasants, who are now in the mountains without clothing or food. Still another result of the fight is the enrichment of all the Bulgarians in the neighborhood, for the smoke of the first firing was not cleared away when these ever-watchful individuals pounced down upon all the cattle the soldiers had not driven off, and carried away hundreds of carts laden with plunder.

This complete catastrophe is bewildering in its dimensions. Of the 75,000, only a few thousands with their arabas turned back towards their homes. *Their fate is not yet known, but, it may be easily conjectured.* The route between Philippopolis and Hermanli should bear for all time the name of the *Road of the Dead.*

It is discouraging to believe that the scenes I have described may be repeated as we proceed towards Constantinople, for a short time ago long waggon trains of refugees passed through Adrianople on their way towards Stamboul, and filled the streets here for weeks, day and night, with a slowly-moving caravan. When asked where they were going, very few of these people could answer.

They only knew that they must get away as fast as possible, and they were so distracted with terror that when their *âraba* broke down, even in the streets of Adrianople, they left their baggage and hurried away without it. As I write the street is filled with arabas still moving along through the cold, rain, and darkness, *most of the women on foot, without shoes, everyone completely drenched, half starved, and exhausted.* The howling of the storm makes a wild accompaniment to the cries of infants and the screeching of the wheels as they pass. *There is no hope of any succour for these unfortunates.*

#### EXTERMINATION OF THE TURKISH PEOPLE.

The reason why the Turkish people fled from their homes in 1877 as the Russians approached, and endured any extremity of cold and starvation rather than fall into the power of the Russians and Bulgarians, will be found in the appalling narratives below.

#### • MASSACRE OF TURKISH VILLAGERS. •

Mr. Edmund Calvert (British Consul at Philippopolis), acting under his instructions, obtained statements from the Turkish refugees themselves regarding the villages of Balvan and Malkotch. In the official correspondence respecting affairs in Turkey, printed by the Foreign Office, Consul Blunt, writing on July 14th, 1877, from Kezanlik, gave evidence.



of the massacre of Turkish villagers under circumstances of incredible barbarity. From Khalel Oglu Hussein, Mustafa Oglu Abdallah, and Suleiman Oglu Raschid, three fugitive inhabitants of Balvan, which contains 200 houses, and is distant three hours from Tirnova, on the road to Selvi, in Bulgaria, he (Mr. Culvert) obtained the following :—

On Saturday morning last (July 7th) two squadrons of Cossacks arrived at Balvan. The elders of the village, on hearing of the approach of the Russians, went out to meet them and make their submission. The Cossacks surrounded the village and summoned the inhabitants to deliver up their arms. On the following day two other squadrons of Cossacks arrived and again surrounded the village. *The Russian troops were accompanied on this occasion by a number of Bulgarians from the neighbouring villages, to the number of 2000 or 3000. These were armed with hatchets, clubs, and knives, as well as guns and sabres of non-military pattern. The rabble began by driving off all the cattle of the village and stripping the persons and houses of the defenceless villagers of everything worth taking. They then set the village on fire in many places at once, and fell upon the inhabitants as they attempted to escape, cutting down men, women and children, and driving them back into the flames. The Cossacks, who formed an outer cordon around the village, looked on quietly whilst these deeds were being perpetrated. The men who made the above statement contrived to escape by a gully which broke the continuity of the Cossack cordon at one end of the village.*

Mr. Calvert appends a note to the foregoing, in which he says :

“Khalel Oglu Hassein, who was the first spokesman, began to tell the above story with some composure ; but when he came to the crowning catastrophe he broke down and sobbed like a child, and his companions with him. It was some time before he could explain that there had been living with him two of his sisters, whose husbands were serving in the army, and whom he was supporting, and that they and their children and his own family—eleven souls in all—had perished. *He saw them being thrown into the flames, the children with their mothers.*”

#### BARBARITIES UPON TURKISH WOMEN.

Shortly after the Russians crossed the Danube in 1877, *great numbers of wounded Turkish women and children*—families who were endeavouring to escape from the invader, and attacked while flying helpless—were brought into Shumla, and there seen by the correspondents of all the English and foreign newspapers, who drew up and signed the following statement :—“The Ottoman Embassy at Paris received the following from the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, dated Constantinople, July 21st, 1877 :—

I have to communicate to you the text of a minute, signed at Shumla by the representatives of the following foreign newspapers :—*Cologne Gazette, Journal des Débats,*

*Neue Freie Presse, Standard, Daily Telegraph, Illustrated London News, Manchester Guardian, The Times, Frankfurter Zeitung, Morning Post, République Française, Pesther Lloyd, Wiener Tagblatt, Morning Advertiser, Scotsman, New York Herald, and Manchester Examiner.* It is as follows:—The undersigned representatives of the foreign Press, assembled at Shumla, deem it as their duty to sum up and sign the narratives they have separately addressed to their newspapers on the acts of cruelty committed in Bulgaria against the inoffensive Mussulman population. They declare that they have with their own eyes seen and have interrogated both at Rasgrad and Shumla women, children, and old men wounded by lance and sword thrusts, not to speak of injuries from firearms, which might be attributed to the accidents of legitimate war. These victims give horrible accounts of the treatment the Russian troops, and sometimes even the Bulgarians, inflict on the fugitive Mussulman. \*According to their declaration the entire Mussulman population of several villages has been massacred. \* Every day there are fresh arrivals of wounded. The undersigned declare that women and children are most numerous among the victims, and that they bear lance wounds.

#### THE TUNDJA VALLEY.

The following is taken from a work, published in 1878, entitled “Revelations from the Seat of War.”

“The Tundja Valley, which lies just south of the Balkans, before the arrival of Gourko’s squadrons, was a charming and prosperous district. Flourishing villages, thriving towns,

blooming cornfields, and rich vines overspread its fertile soil, and the rose gardens, from which the attar of rose is derived, made the face of the country a Paradise to look upon, and the industrious villager rich and comfortable. Turk and Bulgarian lived in peace and good-will with each other. Rumours of war and disturbance had been heard, but the leading men of both communities had combined to repress all feeling, and to maintain order and mutual forbearance.

“Into this happy valley the Russian and Bulgarian troops descended at the end of July, 1877. With what results? That beautiful and populous district became one vast sepulchre. Burnt villages, ruined houses, inhabitants slaughtered with every conceivable horror of outrage and torture, where before this accursed war flourished so much busy and prosperous life. *Hell itself was let loose. Pillage, outrage, rapine, and massacre raged throughout these peaceful homes.* A few thousands of ruined and despairing women and children, starving and hopeless, only remain of a numerous and wealthy population. Consul-General Favcett, writing from Radosto, wrote an awful description of their state.

## THE "SCOTSMAN" CORRESPONDENT.

"Mr. Murray, the correspondent of the *Scotsman*, gave me, wrote Mr. Consul Fawcett, the following dreadful details of the district to the north-west of Eski-Zaghra, Kalofer, Carlova, and Sopot near the pass through which the Russians first debouched on Southern Bulgaria. He states that *these towns are wholly destroyed, and that the streets, the vineyards, and the fields are strewn with the putrefying corpses of men, women, and children.* His account is that on taking possession of these towns, the Russian commanders forced the Turkish peasantry to give up their arms, promising them that they should be protected; that on the approach of Suleiman Pasha the Russians retired, handing the arms above mentioned, and others also, to the Bulgarian peasantry, who immediately turned upon their Turkish neighbours and *ruthlessly murdered them indiscriminately*, the women being first subjected to the most horrible outrages.

## THE "STANDARD" CORRESPONDENT.

"The correspondent of the *Standard*, with the Grand Duke Nicholas, who traversed the whole

country north of the Balkans, bears convincing witness to the good conduct of the Turks :—

I have left myself scarce room to speak of the 'atrocities' as they deserve to be treated. No race—not even the Redskins—have behaved towards a flying and helpless population with such stolid cruelty as have the Bulgars towards the Turks. There was little enmity between the villagers, as is frankly confessed. It was mere lust of blood and loot which caused the Christian to rise against his neighbour when he saw him defenceless. In a wineshop at Sistof a Bulgar was displaying his hacked knife when, my courier entered. He said : 'At first I used to go out with a gun, but this is better. I have killed ten of them. I have cut them like lambs.' For brute ferocity this expression could not be matched. 'The Northern Moslems were indeed slaughtered 'like lambs.' No excesses had they committed; even in their flight they had paid for everything, as was admitted. For two months the Russians have been there, and no report is issued on a single case of ill-treatment by a Turk. A Russian officer asked a passing peasant from whom he had bought two young turkeys for sixpence, if the people were not pleased to welcome their fellow Christians. 'We wait to see,' replied the other frankly, 'if you treat us as well as the Turks did.'

#### THE "TIMES" CORRESPONDENT.

"The *Times* correspondent' with General Gourko, who saw this raid throughout, writing from the camp south of the Balkans, on July 12th, 1877, said :—

*This war is not an affair of civilisation, but of horror upon horror. The Russian soldier looks on the Turk as*

an animal whom he has to chase and kill. The Bulgarians will kill if they can. Prince Wechtenstein rides up and says that the Bulgarians are murdering the wounded Turks. When later we passed over the field of battle, the Bulgarian peasants were pillaging the dead. How can a man with a heart do otherwise than turn away with a shudder from *comfortable matrons who draw their hands across their throats to suggest murder* when they hear that Turkish prisoners have been taken? How can gallant soldiers look with pleasure on men who sully the cause by habitual deeds of blood and massacre?"

## APPENDIX III.

[Referred to on page 52.]

THE appended horrors, wrought upon the thriving village of Offlanlick are attested by so many credible eye-witnesses that, even if it stood a solitary case, it would sufficiently condemn the Cossacks and Bulgarians, and afford convincing proof of the criminal responsibility of those who began the war. The correspondent

of *The Times* with Sulaiman Pasha wrote from Hain Boghaz on August 16, 1877 :—

Yesterday we were invited by Sulciman Pasha to go and see a village that had within the last week been the scene of a frightful massacre by the Bulgarians, aided by Cossacks. The scene of this last massacre is a village called Offlanlick, or Ufflana, about half way between this and Kezanlick, and consequently very near to the Russian lines at the latter place. It was a most flourishing village or town, and probably contained upwards of 3500 inhabitants, many of them, judging from the few houses that remain standing, being very well to do. The death of one young woman could only have occurred two or three days ago at the furthest. It is painful and revolting to give one's reasons for being thus able to fix the date, but I must briefly say that the flesh which was still adhering to the almost skeleton remains and which had not been devoured by the dogs was quite fresh-looking, while the upper part of the body was very little discoloured. I can never forget that woman's face. I was accompanied by the correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, and by our servants, as well as by a Turkish Major and an escort of two or three soldiers. We all stood round that awful sight without saying a word. Her face, which the dogs had respected and left intact, was most strikingly beautiful, with a delicacy of outline and perfect contour of cheek and chin that was only heightened by the pallor of death. Her mouth, which was small and beautifully formed, was slightly open, and her teeth visible, her eyes closed, and long fringed lashes lying on her cheek. There was just a faint expression of pain on the forehead, and her hair was lying all round her head like a rich brown wavy halo. She was entirely nude, and her throat had been



cut with one clean deep cut which must have severed the jugular and windpipe immediately. We also found the remains of women and children in a well. How many there were it was difficult to say, as we did not get them up. But they must have been numerous, and I am inclined to believe the story of a poor trembling old woman who accompanied us to the spot, that there were twelve or fifteen women in the well. On our way home we came across upwards of 120 dead Turks, who had all been massacred by bayonet or sword, or shot suddenly. They were lying in groups, in one place 40, another 50, and two or three smaller parties. That these men were slaughtered in cold blood there can be no reason to doubt. There were several very old men among them. A most successful cavalry expedition returned here last night. At Mouflis, in the Valley of the Tundja, they first found 250 women and children, whose lives, but not their honour, had been spared by the retreating Bulgarians. In the evening the force arrived at Kezanlik. In the town they found upwards of 2000 Turkish women and children. These were unanimous in saying that during the last ten or fifteen days, since they have been left in the hands of the Bulgarians, almost every young woman or girl has been ravished and several have been taken away to the mountains. There was hardly a male Turk in the place; they had all been slaughtered.

## APPENDIX IV.

[Referred to on page 110.] •

## GOOD CONDUCT OF TURKISH SOLDIERS

MR. ARCHIBALD FORBES, the famous war correspondent, who accompanied the Russian army in their invasion of Bulgaria in 1877, bears the following testimony to the forbearance and good conduct of the Turkish troops at that time. On pp. 576 and 577 of the *Nineteenth Century Magazine* for November, 1877, Mr. Forbes says :—

*In all my wayfarings, from the Lom near to the Vid, from the Danube to the Balkans, I could neither hear of nor find human being who had suffered because of the business of last year; and I am sure I enquired sedulously enough. I found no man scored with yataghan slashes, no woman with a story of outrage, which from my later experiences I believe she would have been frank enough with if she had cause to speak. Last year's straw stack stands in the farmyard of every Bulgarian cottager; the colour of its thatch proves that his habitation is not an erection of yesterday. The two-year colt trots on the lea along with the dam and the foal. His buffaloes are mature in their ugliness; his wife's white-metal water-pails are pitted*

with the dint of years. And if the belongings of the rural Bulgarian furnish testimony to the hitherto stable security of his way of life, not less do the surroundings of the townspeople prove their abiding conviction of non-molestation.

In 1877, notwithstanding all the provocation that Turkey had received—notwithstanding the fact that Russia had declared war on account of these very Bulgarians, and was invading Turkish territory and endeavouring to destroy the Turkish power—notwithstanding the notorious fact that swarms of Russian agents were trying their best to stir up her Christian subjects to rebellion—there was not a "single case of outrage," murder, or even plunder on the part of the Turks, their soldiers, or their irregular troops north of the Balkans. It was not till they had the amplest provocation from the massacres and outrages committed by Christian Bulgarians and Cossacks on the helpless Moslem population that retaliatory cruelties were committed.

War was declared in April, 1877. The whole of Bulgaria was swarming with Turkish troops. It was these very Bulgarians that were the ostensible cause of the whole business. Yet "the unspeakable Turk" did no harm to

them. The Danube was passed, fighting ensued, the Turks were driven back, and everything seemed lost; yet still the Moslem committed no outrage. The Bulgarian women and children were not maltreated, the men received no injury. In fact, three whole months passed without a single outrage upon a Christian. Mr. Archibald Forbes' evidence on this point is conclusive. On pp. 577, 578 of the *Nineteenth Century* for November, 1877, he writes:—

*The Turkish soldiers, when the Russians made good their footing on the southern bank of the Danube, evacuated Sistova without so much as breaking a twig on the front of a Bulgarian house. Their civilian brethren had already departed with like unanimity of harmlessness. The disorganised bands of soldiers fell back through the rural villages without so much as plucking a Bulgarian goose or requisitioning a Bulgarian egg. A Turkish army abode for days around Bjela, and finally departed, its rear-guard consisting of irregulars, without a jot of injury wrought on the townfolk or their property. All along the Turkish retreat from the Jambou to the Lom, the Bulgarians experienced the same immunity. The Turkish inhabitants quitted, and the Turkish troops ran away from Tirnova, without a blow or a robbery. It may, in fine, be said that the Turks departed absolutely harmlessly out of the territory, from the Danube to the Balkans, of which the Russians stood possessed when their area of occupation was largest. How the Bulgarians requited this forbearance—or immunity, if the other word seems to ask too much—will have to be told later.*

## APPENDIX V.

[Referred to on page 224.]

## THE SECOND BATTLE OF VALESTINOS.

REUTER'S correspondent with the Greek Army gives the following account of the Battle of Valestinos :

The Turkish attack began on the north-west of Caradaon Hill, above the village of Velestino. It opened with fire from a mountain battery boldly placed on a high ridge commanding to some extent Caradaon Hill, and was replied to by a Greek mountain battery on that hill. It became clear that the Turkish attack on the Greek position from Hadzi Misi, and from Risomylos on the Velestino Valley and the pass to Volo, had been abandoned, and that the intention of the Turks was to isolate the Greek right, or defence of Volo, from the Greek left, or defence of Pharsala, and to cut the railway at Aivalia, and so prevent Greek reinforcements being sent to the right or left as occasion might demand.

This new scheme of attack compelled General Smolenski to change his front from due north to north-west. This was successfully accomplished early in the afternoon. The Greek artillery, as usual, was admirably served on Caradaon Hill and the adjoining eminences, and succeeded in keeping the advance on Velestino Valley in check.

Between one and two o'clock the Turkish infantry deployed from the heights for an assault on Caradaon plateau, and opened a fierce fire, which was returned with effect by the Greek infantry. While the cannonade was in progress a heavy thunderstorm came on. It favoured the Turkish attack, as the thick rain obscured their movements. The Greek infantry, however, continued their fusillade till the rain ceased. There was then a false alarm of a Turkish cavalry charge, and for a few minutes the Greek infantry line wavered. In some places it broke and retired, but the men were soon got in hand again by their officers, and the fusillade was continued with undiminished vigour.

It resulted in the Turkish assault being repulsed all along the line.

At 5 o'clock the Turks were reinforced, evidently from Larissa, and were, it was reported, under the command of Osman Pacha. They could be seen massed on the mountain side in great strength. They extended in beautiful order for an attack on the Greek left, especially on the plateau and the minor hills overlooking the village of Velestino. The Turks were weak in artillery, and their mountain battery did no execution. Their infantry, however, came on with disciplined order, discharging volleys with admirable regularity, but without aim, their bullets rising high in the air and falling harmlessly in the plain.

The Greek infantry, consisting mainly of the 2nd and 8th Regiments, kept well in hand. It delivered volley after volley and shook the Turkish line, while the Greek artillery, splendidly served, dropped shell after shell amongst the fezzes. The Turks withdrew for a time, but shortly afterwards were reinforced, and again came on in grand style, regardless of the hail of the Greek fusillade and the shrapnel from the Greek battery in the hollow.

Once and again the Turks were obliged to halt, to falter, and then retire. The slopes were strewn with dead and wounded. At 6 o'clock another determined assault was made by the Turks on the Greek position along the series of low hills above Velestino, especially on Caradon, the Turks being plainly reinforced by two more battalions. General Smolenski, with something of Skobelev's electric enthusiasm, rode along the lines addressing his troops. He told them they must remember the traditions of their race, and fight, if need be, until the sacred soil of Thessaly was saturated with their blood. The effect of these words was instantaneous. They inspired men and officers alike with renewed ardour. Uniformed soldiers and men in plain clothes, with only bandoliers filled with cartridges, and others again in native dress, responded with a ringing cheer, grasped their Gras rifles more firmly, then gave another shout of defiance and determination, and, reckless of the wild but at times searching shell fire of the Turks, rallied to the defence of their position.

The Greek lines, after steadily firing several volleys on the intrepid Turks, then left their shelter in the trenches and charged the enemy with wild enthusiasm. The Turks quivered for a moment, then retired in confusion to the shelter of the mountain ridges. The engagement thus resulted in a brilliant success for the Greeks. At the end of the day the Greek position at every point, notwithstanding the change of front, was held against the enemy, though the latter were, perhaps, numerically stronger. Darkness alone interfered with the progress of the battle. The Greeks had vindicated their honour and the judgment of their General in selecting a fine defensive position. They showed themselves to be possessed, moreover, of soldierly qualities of a very high order, and proved that they could fight bravely and well under able leadership.

General Smolenski was quite aware that he had by no means disposed of the Turkish army, and he asked for reinforcements to strengthen his position. The loss on either side it is impossible to estimate at present.

The same correspondent then describes the second day's fight on May 6th :—

The battle was resumed in the morning at six o'clock. The situation, as I viewed it in the morning sunshine, was strikingly picturesque. Below was the circular plain, surrounded by low hills, except on the north, where it opens into the great Thessalian plain. In the background were the sparkling waters of Lake Karla and the snow-covered heights of Mount Olympus.

On the north-west of Caradaon is a range of hills, which were occupied by the Turks, between 12,000 and 14,000 strong, with a mountain battery on the crest of the highest peak and a field battery on one of the lower slopes to the east of Velestino. The Caradaon ridge, which on the west side commands the road to Pharsala, was lined with Greek infantry, and on the plateau above the village of Velestino was a battery of field guns.

On the three peaks between that position and the plain on the east were mountain batteries, while on the plain to the north-east of Velestino village was a Greek field battery, which raked the Turkish left advance. The Greek lines across the mouth of the valley between Caradaon and Uvrida Ghala were maintained intact. During Wednesday night General Smolenski had reinforced his reversed left flank and his infantry had advanced, occupying the crest of the ridges of Caradaon Hill and its descent to the plain on the east.



The first direct attack was made by the Turks on the Greek battery posted on the plateau. Here a hot fire was maintained from six to nine o'clock, but the Turkish attack developed on the Greek right towards the plain, in which direction I could see the Turkish infantry being extended under cover of cavalry. At eleven o'clock a fierce assault was made by the Turkish infantry on the Greek lines just above the village of Velestino. It was supported by the fire of a mountain battery on a distant peak and of a field battery on the eastern slope towards the plain. The assault was gallantly repelled by the Greek infantry, which occupied the crest of the ridge, and by the Greek battery on the east of the village, which showered shells on the Turks with terrible effect.

Between eleven and twelve o'clock a determined attempt was made by the Turks to cut the centre of the Greek left front. The Turks occupied a ridge, while the Greeks held the hill, separated from the Turkish line by a deep gulch. A hot artillery fire from the Turkish right battery was evidently meant to demoralise the Greek infantry, but the shells fell wide and seldom exploded. Meanwhile, the Greek infantry peppered the Turkish lines with well-directed volleys, and the Greek battery on the plateau played hayoc with a beautifully-served fire.

At a quarter to twelve the Turkish infantry swarmed down from their entrenchments into the gulch with the intention of charging the Greek position on the hill, but they were shattered under a withering Greek infantry fire, while four shells in succession dropped in their midst with terrible effect. The remnant retired at the run beyond the ridge which they had previously occupied. Between twelve and one o'clock the fire slackened along the whole line, but it was resumed at a quarter-past one on both the left and right. On the left a Turkish mountain battery was silenced

by two shells from the Greek battery on the plateau, two guns being shattered simultaneously.

The Turks, reinforced from Aivali, made a rush on the Greek left round the west shoulder of Caradaon Hill, their objective being the railway to Pharsala, which they obviously meant to destroy. The Turkish infantry swarmed up the slopes in a magnificently resolute manner, and drove back the first line of Greek skirmishers, compelling them to abandon a demi-battery or two mountain guns. The Greek second line held their position and checked the further Turkish advance, which, supported by a concealed battery on the mountain, threatened to turn the Greek left in the direction of the monastery of St. George, and so cut off connection between General Smolenski's division and the Pharsala division. At two o'clock the firing ceased along the whole line, except on the eastern left, where occasional sputterings indicated that a rifle fusillade was still being kept up. The Turkish commander now made a new development, for which he had evidently been preparing all day.

I climbed the crest of Uvrido Ghala, on the east front of the mouth of Volo Pass, where I could see bodies of Turkish cavalry riding hard along the shore of Lake Karfa. On the line of route to their right, and towards the Greek position on the plain, was a long artillery train, while from the folds of the hills and from the village of Hadzimisi columns of Turkish infantry were marching with slow persistence.

At three o'clock the Turkish artillery unlimbered (free of the trees at Rizomylos village) and opened fire on the Greek centre in the plain between Velestino and Uvrido Ghala. It was evident at once that they had large guns, captured probably at Larissa. With these they shelled with terrible effect the Greek north front. By five o'clock,

the ammunition of the Greek batteries was all but exhausted, and General Smolenski gave orders for the gradual withdrawal of the majority of the artillery in the direction of Volo. While this was being done, the Turkish fire from the large field guns was resumed at a very quick rate, and soon rendered the village of Velestino untenable, as well as the ridges to the west. From the west and north the Turks then made a determined advance. At half past seven they occupied and burned Velestino, blew up the railway bridge, and cut the line between Velestino and Pharsala.

The defeat of the Greek army was now complete, and the Pass across the mountains to Volo was left open to the Turks. The withdrawal of the artillery on the right front had been begun early in the afternoon, and one full battery of field cannon, as well as a few mountain guns, were safely brought to Volo and transferred to Greek warships in the bay. Search-lights flashing up the mountain side rendered great assistance by showing the road in the intense darkness. Over a dozen cannon were abandoned or captured by the Turks.

About 200 wounded were brought down to Volo by a train which escaped half-a-dozen shells that a big Turkish battery dropped near it; but I am afraid this is not the full account, and that many more wounded were left on the field. No trustworthy estimate can be made of the number killed, but certainly the casualties were much greater among the Turks than among the Greeks, the fire of the latter all through being much more effective until the Turks brought the ten-centimetre guns into action.

About three o'clock General Smolenski's shattered army was cut in two. The left wing he retired, I do not know in what order, by Pefsephla, in the direction of Halmyros, where he would have the protection of the Greek fleet.

The right wing, or what was left of it, came on towards

Volo, but it was broken and demoralised. The retreat across the mountains to Volo in the dense night was almost as disorganised as that from Turnavo to Larissa. Just as then, there was a good deal of firing, but happily it was indiscriminate firing; the irregulars on the hills around occasionally blazing away with their rifles, and they fired in the air, not at imaginary pursuers. Volo was the scene of a wild panic during Thursday night and on Friday. The whole population turned out into the streets with their household goods. Peasants from over a score of villages on the slopes of Pelion rushed into the town and increased the confusion. Marauders, too, were soon about, and brigandage became common. Five steamers in the bay were speedily filled by thousands of refugees and their baggage, while scores of caiques sailed away to the islands with poor people. The disorder on the quays and in the streets became so great that the British and French Consuls visited the international fleet in the bay and requested that a force of British, Italian, French, and Austrian marines should be landed for the protection of the lives of those who could not get away, and to prevent the town being looted by brigands, even before the arrival of the Turks, who were momentarily expected.

I got on board the last steamer which left the port. Eighteen hundred men, women, and children were packed on deck and in the hold as thick as herrings in a barrel. Their sufferings during that awful night can be imagined.

## APPENDIX VI.

### At Larissa, P. THE BATTLE OF PHARSALOS.

THE following is Mr. Montgomery's account of the battle of Pharsalos, which appeared in the *Standard* of May :—

#### TARTARI, *Thursday Morning.*

This village lies between Nebegler and Pharsala, on the low swells which divide the great plain of Larissa from that of Trikhala. Yesterday morning the Turkish Army advanced towards Pharsala in three columns. That of Hamdi Pacha was in the centre, and moved through Tsurmakb, Memdouk Pacha was on the left, his division passing through Bakratsi, while Neschat's Division, on the right, took the road through Buglar. Hairi, with the First Division, was far out on the plain in advance, and was already near Sophades.

It was understood that the day's work was to be to drive the Greeks from their advanced positions back towards the river, and that the general battle would not take place until to-day, when more troops would arrive. The comparatively feeble resistance offered by the Greeks, however, led on the Turks, eager as these were to get to close quarters, so far that the reconnoissance became a battle, ending in a great victory, which has placed Pharsala in their hands, broken

the Greek Army into two parts, and resulted in the capture of a great quantity of military stores and provisions, left behind by the Greeks in their hasty evacuation of the town.

Memdouk was the first to come in contact with the enemy, who occupied some low hills which border the plain of Trikhala, some three miles north of Karademerisi, and eight from Pharsala. The cannon opened fire at half-past nine, but in a very short time the Greeks withdrew their batteries, and about ten o'clock Memdouk occupied Karademerisi. The infantry on both sides now came into play, and the roll of musketry was almost unbroken, the Greeks holding Tekes and the wood on the hill obstinately.

After the combat had continued for some three hours, we could see, from the eminence on which we had taken our stand, the Turks crossing over the crest of the wooded hill. As soon as I saw that at this point the Greeks were definitely pushed back, I moved forward to it, and thence gained a view over the flat plain of Pharsala to the foot of the hills, the town itself being almost exactly facing me.

It was now three o'clock, and the whole three Turkish divisions could be seen advancing in line. That of Neschat was meeting with the least resistance, although the Greek force opposed to him, which I estimated at ten thousand men, was far larger than that opposed to either of the other divisions.

Hasadi Pacha was stoutly resisted by a much smaller number of Greeks, who were posted in and around Tartari, the place at which I am now writing. The obstinate resistance offered here enabled the main body of the Greeks to retire to Gasgunari, in front of the line by which Neschat was advancing. One of the battalions falling back from Tartari crossed the bridge over the Enipeus, but a body some two thousand strong continued to hold the swells on this side of the river. The country here was

entirely free from hills, and, every detail of the fight was plainly visible, although in places dimmed by the light smoke that rose everywhere.

Here and there small hamlets were tenaciously held by the Greeks; and, as long as they were exposed only to musketry and artillery fire, they maintained themselves; but when the Turks, who for the most part kept their formation in line, heedless of the fire directed upon them, came up with unwavering front, the defenders at once retired. By this time the Turkish batteries had taken up their positions on the hills the infantry had won, and were keeping up a terrible fire upon the Greeks wherever they held together, while a mountain battery was paying particular attention to a village which the Greeks were holding. The Greek batteries replied; but their fire was very ineffectual, and a large proportion of their shells buried themselves in the deep soil without exploding. The Greeks, although constantly falling back, did so in good order, and at no point was there anything approaching a rout, although suffering heavily from the Turkish batteries, several of which were now firing shrapnel.

The Turkish divisions were now in line with each other, moving forward together to the attack of the large village Vasili, round which the greater portion of the Greek force had gathered, supported by several batteries of artillery. They had, however, by this time had enough of it, and as the great Turkish force moved against them they began, after a few hurried discharges of musketry, to withdraw, and made across the plain to the bridge over the Enipeus. While crossing the bridge they were exposed to a terrible fire from the Turkish batteries, and their loss must have been very heavy at this point. It was now growing dark, but the Turkish infantry approached to within a short distance of Pharsala, and kept up a heavy fire upon it,

while the batteries sent shell after shell crashing into it. Gradually the fire ceased on both sides, but some of the Turks, making their way forward without orders, presently brought in the news that the Greeks were evacuating the town. The Turks at once entered it, driving the Greek rearguard headlong before them.

*Throughout the day the Turks fought with a steady bravery that was irresistible. There was no hurry, no rushing forward, but an advance—for the most part in line—that never wavered, however deadly the fire of the enemy's shot and shell. The gaps in the ranks were closed up instantly, and the line maintained its quiet, irresistible advance as if the men were not only indifferent to, but actually unconscious of, the fire to which they were exposed.*

The Greeks did not fight well at first. They had all the advantage of position, which they had, as usual, strengthened with entrenchments, but their resistance to the Turkish advance was feeble. When, however, they had fallen back to the plain, where they were commanded by the Turkish batteries posted on the hills they had abandoned, they held their ground more resolutely, and several of their battalions clung to their positions with great resolution, and so gave time to the rest to make good their retreat.

PHARSALA, Thursday, Midday.

The whole division of Ha.udi Pacha entered the town at six o'clock this morning, and at eleven Edhem Pacha, with his Staff, arrived.

The town was entirely deserted by its inhabitants, the greater portion of whom must have left two or three days previously, and the rest followed as soon as the fighting began, for there was no sign whatever of haste or confusion such as marked the evacuation of Larissa. From wounded



soldiers left behind we learned that the Greeks had scarcely made a pause after entering the town, but that the retreat had begun as soon as the Turkish shrapnel began to burst overhead, and the shot to fall among the houses. They have retreated to Domoko. They left behind them, in the town, great quantities of biscuits, two thousand eight hundred shells, and a great store of musketry ammunition. The shell will be useful to the Turks, as their cannon are of the same calibre as those of the Greeks.

Certainly the Greek retreat was not the result of any general plan. The place and its surroundings had been most formidably entrenched, and as batteries placed on the hills behind it could have swept all the approaches to the town with their fire, the position could not have been carried without enormous loss. The sudden retreat must, therefore, have been determined by the fact that the troops could no longer be trusted to fight even in the strongest position. The capture of Pharsala renders the position of the Greek division at Velestino untenable, and, indeed, renders it certain that nothing but instant retreat by the road along the Eastern coast can save them from destruction.

Sifulah Pacha, chief of the Headquarter Staff, particularly distinguished himself in the late battle. While the combat was raging on the hill in front of Karademnerisi, three Albanian battalions attacked with too much ardour, and drawing upon themselves a tremendous fire of both musketry and artillery, was beginning to fall into disorder, when Sifulah rode up. He at once placed himself in front of the wavering line, reformed and steadied the Albanians, and rode for some distance at their head. Later on in the day, in the attack on the village of Barakli, he again led the Albanians to the assault.

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